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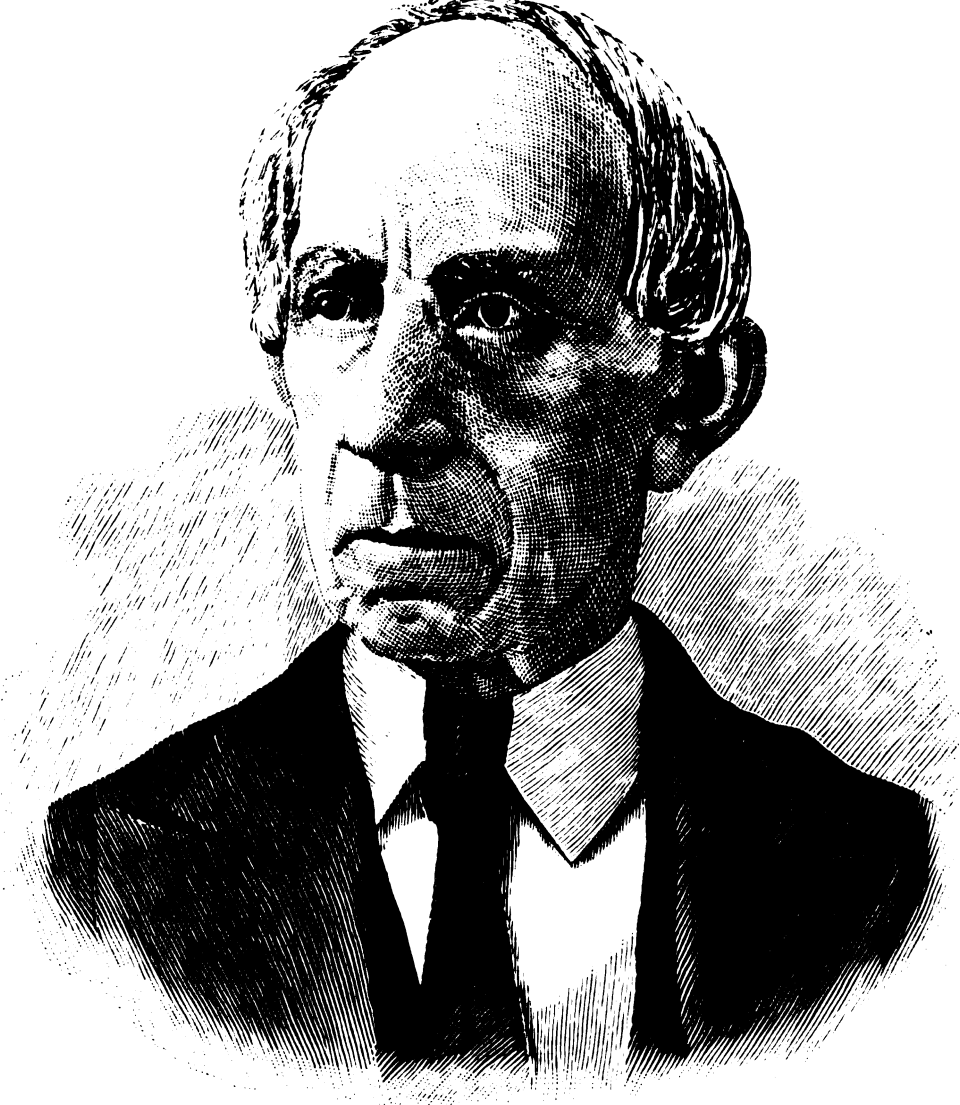
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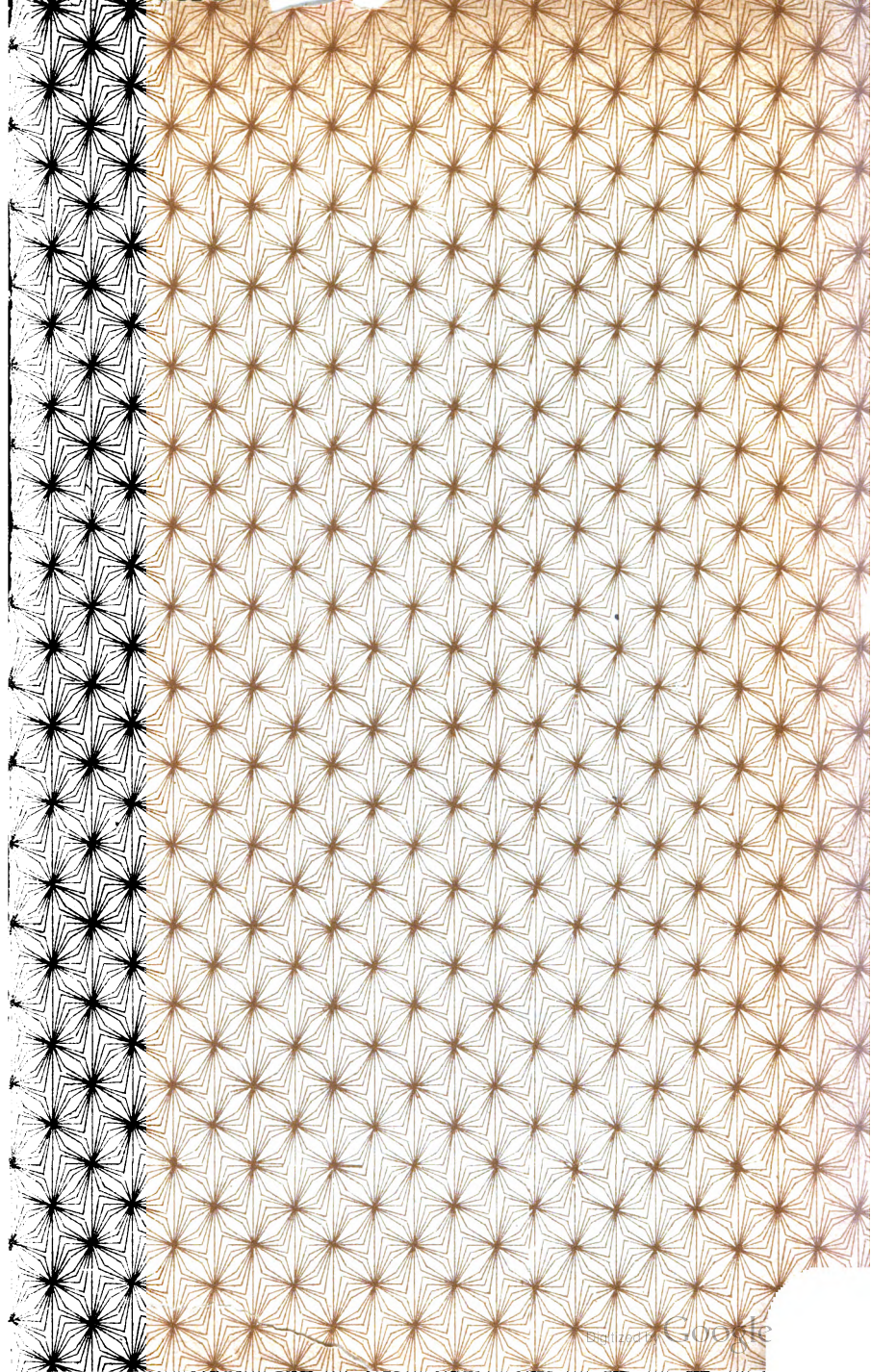
*The Life and Work of Francis
Jacob Ruth, a Pioneer of ...*

J. Crouse

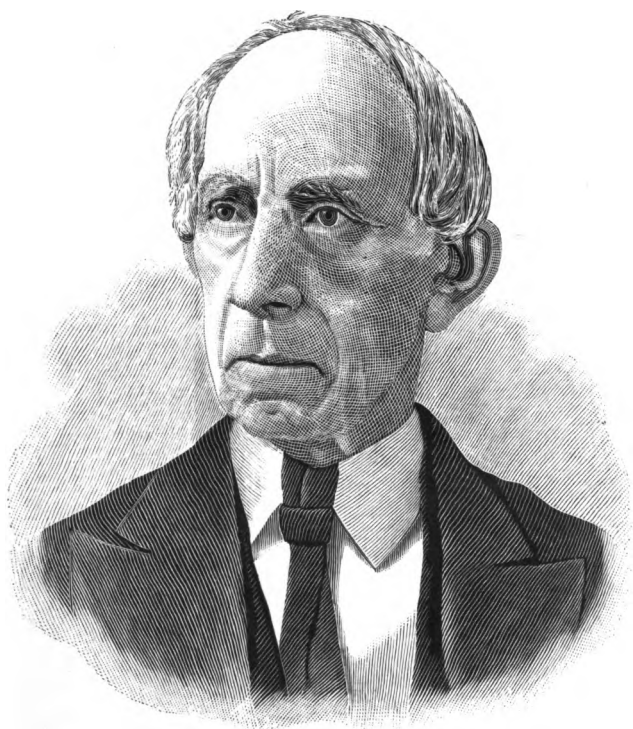
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Yours truly
F. J. Ruth

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THE
LIFE AND WORK
- OF -
REV. FRANCIS JACOB RUTH,
- A -
PIONEER OF LUTHERANISM,
- IN -
NORTH-WESTERN OHIO.

PLYMOUTH, OHIO:
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PREFACE.

THE "Memorial Committee" appointed by Wittenberg Synod, at its annual convention, held at Findlay, Hancock county, Ohio, September 24-29, 1884, appended the following to their Report, viz:

"Your Committee would also inform this body, that a Biographical Sketch of the life and work in the ministry, of our deceased brother, REV. FRANCIS JACOB RUTH, together with numerous other documents and papers, have been committed to our care, to be presented to this body for publication, if it shall be disposed so to do; and your Committee recommend that Synod take measures looking to the publication of the same.

J. CROUSE,
H. L. WILES, } Committee.
D. W. SMITH, }

The recommendation was adopted, and the matter placed in the hands of a committee, consisting of Revs. J. Crouse, D. D., D. Summers, and C. S. Ernsberger.

At its annual meeting at Springfield, O., the above named committee reported its work as completed, and a committee on publication was appointed, consisting of Rev. C. S. Ernsberger and Rev. J. A. Hall.

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LIFE AND WORK

—OF—

REV. F. J. RUTH.

CHAPTER I.

HAVING been frequently and most earnestly solicited by some of my esteemed friends, and especially by my beloved children, to furnish them with a brief history of my life and labors in the ministry, in the English Evangelical Lutheran Church, during more than half a century, I have at length concluded to comply with this very reasonable request.

And for the information of my dear children, more especially, I will endeavor to give some account of my ancestors, and of the peculiar manner in which I was brought into the Gospel ministry.

Concerning my ancestors, however, my knowledge is very limited, and such as I have, has been obtained chiefly from some of my more aged relatives.

It accordingly seems that my great-grandfather, on my father's side, came from Switzerland to this country, U. S. A., prior to the Revolutionary War. After arriving at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, he was sold for his passage over the ocean, to a certain gentleman who resided at Sinking Springs, in Berks Co., Penn'a.

Being naturally a strong, healthy and industrious man, he was enabled to redeem himself in due time, not only, but ultimately to purchase the entire real estate of his landlord and friend. His ancestors, before he came to this country, were quite wealthy, and had lived in England for some time, during the reign of Queen Ann.

My great-grandfather on my mother's side, came from some part of Germany to this country, and located in Fredericktown, now called Frederick City, Maryland. His name was Allix, and was a man who was much respected by all who knew him. I remember having often seen him, and conversed with him. He departed this life in the ninety-eighth year of his age.

My grandfather on my father's side, resided near Reamstown, in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, and was a farmer by occupation. He was married to Catharine Deschter, with whom he had twelve children. He was a soldier in the Revolutionary War, and died on his farm at about middle age. My grandfather on my mother's side was married to Elizabeth Allix,

and resided in Fredericktown, Maryland. He was at one time the proprietor of a hotel and store, both of which he kept for a number of years together. General George Washington always made his house his home, when in the place, and my mother was well acquainted with the General. This grandfather's name was Jacob Medtart, and was for a time Paymaster during the Revolutionary War. He was the father of three sons and four daughters, of whom my mother was the eldest.

My father was the second son of Francis Ruth, and was born on the 1st of November, A. D., 1779. When he had arrived to manhood he went with a man by the name of Adams, to Fredericktown, Maryland, and commenced the mercantile business. He soon afterwards was intermarried with Margaretta Medtart, with whom he had five children. My father's name was Henry. In the course of time he removed from Fredericktown, Maryland, to Georgetown, District of Columbia, where he took charge of the Holtzman Hotel, and continued its management for a number of years. He was in time elected to different offices in the District, and died on the 6th of March, A. D., 1815. My father was in the war of 1812, was Captain of an Infantry Company called the "Georgetown Blues."

While in camp he lost his health in a measure, and soon after passed away, when in the 35th year of his age, and was buried with the honors of war.

I was born in Fredericktown, Maryland, on the 9th of January, 1805, and was baptized on the 13th day of February following, and was named Francis Jacob, after my two grandparents. Both of my parents were worthy members of the Christian Church. My father was a member of the German Reformed, and my mother of the Lutheran Church.

They were also very much concerned for the spiritual and eternal welfare of their children, and embraced every suitable opportunity in giving them religious instruction, and those instructions produced an excellent effect upon my mind and heart, at least, leading me, at a very early period of my life, to seek the Lord, and his salvation. They also directed me to read the Scriptures, and to memorize the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, and the Apostle's Creed, which I found in a certain prayer book.

As far back as my memory serves me I was in the habit of praying, at stated times, in secret. When about eight years of age, it was impressed on my mind that I should speak to young associates on the subject of religion. I yielded to the impression thus made on my mind, and the result was, the formation, by us, of a little prayer meeting, which in time was held in the house of an aged, pious German residing in the place, and who was always present, and encouraged us in the good work.

Sometimes the leader of this meeting would give a word of exhortation. Soon, at this early

period of my life, I felt a desire to become a minister of the Gospel.

Both my experience and observation led me to feel that Christian parents cannot be too early nor too careful in imparting religious instruction to their children, and in setting before them a consistent example of a godly life. I do not hesitate to say here, that if parents did attend more faithfully to these necessary, and heaven-demanded requirements, there would be found a much better state of things amongst the youth in our families than now exists.

Some time after my father's death, I was taken to Lancaster County, Penn'a, to live with an uncle of mine. This uncle resided on a large and very beautiful farm. He kept a strict watch over my morals, and I usually attended public worship with the family, at a church about two miles distant from the home.

When I was about 14 years of age, I attended a course of catechetical instruction under the Rev. F. A. Herman, of the German Reformed Church, and was in due time received, with others, as a member of that church, by the solemn and impressive rite of confirmation. After I had united with the church, my impressions that I ought to prepare myself for the work of the ministry, were greatly revived, so much so, indeed, that I was, as it were, impelled to make my feelings known to my uncle, upon hearing of which he advised me to write to two of my other uncles on the subject. Accordingly I wrote to General Joshua Medtart,

of Baltimore, and to Mr. Lewis Medtart, Postmaster of Fredericktown, Maryland. I soon received their answers, both advising me to return to my native city, and to consult with Rev. D. F. Schaeffer in relation to the subject.

I complied with their wishes, but on my return I soon found that some of my relatives, and friends, were opposed to my studying for the ministry, and urged me to learn some trade, assigning as their reason that ministers of the gospel generally remained poor.

I yielded to their remonstrances against my inclination, but soon found that the trade I was advised to learn did not agree with my health, and I withdrew from the enterprise. Soon afterward I was appointed a clerk in the Postoffice of the city, and after laboring in that position for several months, I was solicited by Rev. Dr. Schaeffer, of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, to commence a course of study under his direction, saying that the church was greatly in need of more preachers. But as my means of support were very limited, I concluded to defer the matter until I should be able to obtain more means.

Just about this time, an uncle of my father, residing in Berks County, Pa., died, leaving a large estate, and having no children of his own, myself, amongst others, received from that estate several hundreds of dollars. By this providential circumstance means were provided and the way opened for me to pursue the object which I had so long and so earnestly desired,

and anticipated. Hence I at once resolved to commence a course of study preparatory to my entering the ministry.

CHAPTER II.

DR. SCHAEFFER invited me to call at his study, for the purpose of an interview respecting the matter. I accordingly visited him and after some conversation on the subject, he began to examine me as to my education, and motives for wishing to prepare myself for the ministry. He seemed to be pleased with the examination, and desired that I would at once begin the work of preparation. He put into my hands a Latin Grammar, and directed me to study, and memorize certain portions of it. This circumstance occurred about the 1st of July, 1826, and but a short time before Rev. S. S. Schmucker, D. D., was called to take charge of the Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania.

After having pursued various studies under Dr. Schaeffer, for the space of about three years, the Doctor requested me to commence writing sermons for examination, and he also sent me, occasionally, to preach to the desti-

tute in different parts of the county, and to fill appointments of his own in the country round about the city.

These exercises proved to be of great advantage to me in many important respects. In writing and preaching sermons, I was enabled to make a practical use of what I had gained by study, and my progress in the acquisition of theological knowledge was greatly facilitated, my memory strengthened and my confidence assured.

As the Synod of Maryland and Virginia was soon to convene in Taneytown, Maryland, I was advised by Dr. Schaeffer, and by other ministers also, who had heard me preach, to attend the meeting of said Synod, and to apply for regular license to preach, in order that I might take charge of some vacant pastorate.

Accordingly I attended the Synod at Taneytown, and was appointed to preach before that body, and thus afford the members of Synod an opportunity of judging as to my qualifications for authority to enter the ministry. I complied with this appointment to preach before Synod, but did so with no small degree of reluctance.

After a sermon delivered by Rev. N. B. Little, I was duly licensed to preach the gospel for one year, and was directed to visit the Boonsborough charge, in Washington County, Maryland. My charge before Synod was delivered by Rev. Dr. Hazlius, one of the Professors of the Institution at Gettysburg, Penn'a.

COPY OF ORIGINAL.

Be it known : To all to whom these presents shall come, that the Rev. Francis J. Ruth, of Frederick, Maryland, was deemed competent to officiate as a candidate of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, of Maryland and Virginia, and is hereby authorized to perform all requisite Ministerial Acts, in the congregation at Smith's. in Baltimore County, and such others as may be entrusted to his care by the said Ministerium of Maryland and Virginia, which reserves to itself the exclusive power of renewing or annulling this license at any of its annual meetings.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the seal of the Ministerium.

Done at Georgetown, Frederick County, Maryland, this nineteenth day of October, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and thirty.



DAVID F. SCHAEFFER, President
of the Ev. Luth'n Synod of
Maryland and Virginia.

Abraham Reck, Sec'y.

In July, A. D. 1831, I was earnestly solicited by Revs. D. Haner and D. P. Rosenmiller, to visit North Carolina, where they were at that time laboring, and where Lutheran ministers were greatly needed. I was also urged by Rev. N. B. Little, who had just returned from a missionary town in Ohio, to first visit this State, and after deliberating upon the counsels,

and wishes of those brethren, for a little while, I concluded to come to Ohio, and at once began to make the necessary preparations for the journey.

When the officers of Synod had learned of my intention to come West, they proposed to appoint me as a missionary to Ohio. I accepted the appointment very gladly, and was directed in said commission to visit the following points in the State, viz: New Philadelphia, Mansfield, Mount Vernon, Delaware, Columbus, Chillicothe, and Circleville, and Sinking Springs, in Highland County.

To whom it may concern:

WHEREAS, the Rev. Francis J. Ruth, a member of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, of Maryland and Virginia, has expressed his desire to preach the Gospel in the State of Ohio, and knowing him to be a fervent and zealous laborer for the Lord, I do hereby appoint him a Missionary to labor and perform all the duties of a regular Minister in the Ev. Luth'n Church, among such people and in such Districts as he may find destitute.

As this Missionary travels without compensation from the Synod, it is hoped that he will be recompensed, and treated generously.

DAVID F. SCHAEFFER,
President of the Ev. Lutheran Synod
of Maryland and Virginia.

Frederick, August 20th, 1831.

About the 1st of August, 1831, I left my native city, Fredericktown, Maryland, on horseback, and took my course westward. Nothing of special note occurred in my experience during my journey, except that I stopped and preached several times, at different places on the way. Arriving at New Philadelphia, and having a letter of introduction to a certain gentleman by the name of Dull, I called on him, at his residence, and was very cordially welcomed, and kindly entertained by him and his family.

After a few days rest I preached twice, in the Court House, to respectable and attentive audiences. While here I became acquainted with Dr. Samuel Stough, a son of Rev. John Stough, of the Lutheran Church. The Doctor expressed a most earnest wish that I would visit Ashland, Ohio, and gave me a letter of introduction to his brother, who resided in that place. In due time I visited Ashland, and called on Mr. Jonas Stough, and was most kindly received by him and his estimable wife. In this place I visited, in company with Mr. Stough, several Lutheran families in the village and vicinity, and preached in the evening to the people of the town.

During my stay here I became acquainted with Mr. John Jacobs and his lady. Our acquaintance soon became very cordial and pleasant, and I have reason to believe that our friendship proved to be mutually beneficial. These dear friends always treated me with

great kindness, and bestowed on me many tokens of their regard for, and interest in my welfare; and though far away from my native place, my kindred and early associates, I yet felt that I was in the midst of friends, and at home, in the many families which I visited, in which the fear of the Lord was cherished.

Leaving Ashland, I proceeded to visit Mansfield, and stopped at the Wiler House. In this place I found only three members of our Church—Mr. Jacob Hammer and wife, and Mr. George Cocher. The annual conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church being in session there at the time, and the pulpits of the several churches being supplied by ministers from the conference, I found no opportunity to preach in the place.

I was advised by the friends I had met in the town, to visit Mount Zion congregation, about eight miles east from Mansfield. I accordingly visited that neighborhood, and called on Mr. Jacob Culler, one of the prominent members of that church, and stayed over night with him, and had a very pleasant time with his seven sons, who were all single and at home.

The membership of the Mount Zion Church at that time preferred German preaching, and German services generally.

On the next day I proceeded to visit Mount Vernon, but I could hear of no Lutherans in that place and vicinity.

From Mount Vernon I went to Columbus,

and called on Mr. Lewis Heil, and remained over night with him, and received the kindest treatment from him and his family. He informed me that they had just secured the services of Rev. W. Smith, and that their congregation required only German services. Hence on the following day I went on to Circleville, where my friend, Rev. N. B. Little, had located, and at his request I preached in the Court House of the place.

Here, in company with Brother Little, and a few other gentlemen, I visited some ancient mounds and fortifications in the vicinity of the town. We ascended the largest of those mounds, and at the summit of the hill we found that some person had digged into it some distance, and had thrown out a number of human bones; and these were much larger than the bones of the race now living. One jaw-bone, for instance, was of immense size, and belonged, no doubt, to a member of a prehistoric race of men. The opinion of those persons present was, that the ancient inhabitants of this country, whoever they were, had formed these mounds as places of worship, that the altars erected to their gods were built on the tops of these elevations, and that when their great men and priests died, their bodies were buried here, under those altars.

After spending several days with Brother Little, I proceeded to Chillicothe, where I found only ten persons who were Lutherans, and these were all Germans and desired preach-

ing in the German language only. On the next day I was overtaken by a severe rain storm, and for want of shelter I received a thorough wetting, through and through, and did not reach Sinking Springs until the second day after leaving Chillicothe. At this place I was directed to call upon a gentleman who was a strong believer in Calvinism, and who received me rather coolly, but still invited me to call at his house. While in conversation with him at his house, he remarked that Dr. Martin Luther was a Calvinist in sentiment, and strenuously defended his assertion. But after considerable discussion had on the subject, he finally acknowledged that he might be mistaken in regard to that matter. He then invited me to dine with him, and I gladly accepted of his hospitality.

After we had dined he proposed to accompany me to the home of Mr. F. Roth, who resided on a farm about two miles distant from the town. I found Brother Roth to be a true Lutheran, and he received me very kindly, indeed, and expressed himself highly gratified that the Maryland Synod had sent me to hunt out and visit the destitute members of our Church in Ohio.

On the Sabbath following I preached in a frame church, to a large and interested audience. Father Roth informed me that there was another church about twelve miles distant from his place, and as the two constituted a pastorate, he and others, and among them my

Calvinistic friend, desired me to locate among them. I visited the other congregation, and preached to the people there, but was told that they would require German preaching occasionally. From this place I went on to Delaware, and preached several times in the place and vicinity ; and having now finished my mission, I resolved to return again to Richland county, for I seemed to be impressed with the idea that my future work would be found in that region of the State. I left Delaware on the 30th of September, and arrived at Mansfield on the following day, and preached on that same evening, in the Presbyterian Church, to a large and interested audience. On the next day I was called upon by members of this church, and others, and was strongly solicited by them to locate in Mansfield, assuring me that congregations of Lutherans could be gathered in the county, and in places not far away from the town. I replied that it was my purpose to again visit Ashland, and if I could secure a congregation in that place, I would then locate, either in Ashland or in Mansfield.

CHAPTER III.

I accordingly proceeded to Ashland, and on the 9th of October I preached in a barn, near the village, to a large gathering of attentive hearers. After the services were over, a number of the brethren, together with other citizens of the place, called on me at the house of my friend, Mr. John Jacobs, and most earnestly desired me to locate in their village, and to preach to them regularly, promising at the same time, to remunerate me for my services. I yielded to their solicitations, and located in Ashland.

I now began to preach regularly, both in Ashland and in Mansfield. And it was not long after until I also began to preach at Dilly's Mill, and at Mr. John Kuhn's, in Wayne County.

During the first year after locating at Ashland, I also preached occasionally at the little village of London, near Shelby, in Richland County; and also at Galion, and at Plymouth,

and at Wooster, Wayne County. My labors were thus extended over a wide scope of country, as I endeavored to preach to the destitute Lutherans who were scattered through these counties.

I organized the Church in Ashland, on the 23rd of October, A. D., 1831; and that in Mansfield in the Spring of 1832. The congregation at Mr. Kuhn's had been organized before I began to preach for them. My people, in these several places, seemed to appreciate my labors very much, but as they were new beginners, in those new settlements, and were generally poor, comparatively speaking, my salary was, of course, not very large. For though I was practically a missionary, yet I never received one cent of missionary aid, and was, consequently, compelled to "cut my coat according to the cloth."

My salary, for the first year after locating, amounted, all told, to \$75.00. This, however, did not discourage me at all, for being much from home, and amongst my parishioners, my necessary expenses were not very large. True, I found that the condition of being constantly needy, constantly in want of means to make myself comfortable, was not the most pleasant one, indeed; yet I also found that even this situation has its legitimate uses, and amongst those uses, the habit of frugality, the virtue of expending nothing unnecessarily, was not the least. I always had confidence to believe that if God had truly called me to preach the gos-

pel, He would take care that my temporal wants should be supplied: for, "Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? Who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock?"

The following incident occurred about this time, which served very greatly to confirm my faith and trust in Divine Providence. The Rev. E. Greenawald paid me a visit at Ashland, and while with me I ventured to tell him of my necessitous condition, and to ask him for a little material aid.

I informed him that I had expended all my means in my missionary tour; that the amount which I had received from my people, since locating at Ashland, had not been sufficient to meet my pressing wants, and as the weather had become very severe, I found myself in special need of some stockings, suitable to the season, and could not think of getting them on credit, and hence would be very much obliged if he would loan me one dollar, for a short time, with which to procure the needed articles. He replied that he had himself but little means, and much as he would like to accommodate me, he was not prepared to do so at that time. With a sad heart I arose and left him, to go out and feed my horse; and as I went, I found, on the pavement, near my boarding place, a silver coin, usually called a "five-franc-piece," equal to about ninety-five cents. I could hear of no one who had lost such a piece, and hence

I regarded it as a gift of God to me. This amount was sufficient to supply my immediate want, and I most heartily thanked God for his goodness, and took fresh courage. I mention this circumstance, simple as it may appear, for the encouragement of others who may be called of God to labor in his cause under like experiences.

“So Providence for us, high, infinite,
“Makes our necessities its watchful task,
“Hearkens to all our prayers, helps all our wants,
“And ev’n if it denies what seems our right,
“Either denies because ’twould have us ask,
“Or seems but to deny, or in denying, grants.”

On Trinity Sunday, A. D. 1832, the German Evangelical Lutheran Synod, of Ohio, met at Columbus. I attended that convention, and made application for membership in that body. I was kindly received by the brethren, and my license was renewed by them for another year.

I remained in connection with that organization until an English Synod was formed, four years later. About the 1st of October, of the same year, I ceased preaching regularly at Mansfield, but at the earnest solicitations of the brethren there, I promised to visit them, occasionally, until such time when they could be supplied from some other source.

During the second year of my regular ministry, I took charge of the Mount Zion congregation. This church was, I think, the first regularly organized congregation in northern Ohio, and has always been one of the most liberal of all our churches in this State. Until I

took charge of this church, they had German preaching, and German services only. After preaching for this people for a short time, I introduced social worship, or prayer meetings. This was something new amongst Lutherans in Ohio, but the new departure was sustained by the Church, even from its incipency, and the work was soon crowned with unmistakable evidences of good. An extensive revival of religion soon followed, and the congregation began to increase, numerically and spiritually; and the work of the Lord went on gloriously.

A new house of worship was built, and my audiences grew to be quite large in proportion to the settlement round about. I now commenced the time-honored work in the history of the Lutheran Church, catechising the young; and God blessed my labors in this direction, and consecrated the work "to the praise of the glory of His grace."

It was especially encouraging, and remarkable withal, that these catechumens all came out and took part in public social prayer. I could now see that the congregation was destined to exert a salutary influence over that entire neighborhood.

About this time brothers Isaac and Christopher Culler, both sons of father Jacob Culler, Sen., began to prepare for the ministry. They were both pious and excellent young men, and their subsequent work in the active ministry was crowned with a good degree of success.

I continued to preach for this congregation

until the Spring of 1841, and then resigned it in behalf of Rev. George Leiter.

The first members of Mount Zion were the Cullers, Ernsbergers, Kings, Smiths, and others.

During the third and last year of my labors in Ashland, I preached, occasionally, as I could, at London, Bucyrus, Sulphur Springs, Galion, Kuhn's, Dilly's Mills and Plymouth. It was during this year also that I made an effort to secure a house of worship in Ashland. I felt that this was necessary to my future success there. I proposed to the congregation, that if they would raise three or four hundred dollars towards this enterprise, I would try to raise \$1,000,00 towards the object, from the citizens outside of the Church. The congregation agreed to my proposition, and I went to work and soon secured the amount promised, on subscription. Besides this amount, Mr. Francis Graham, a merchant in the village, offered to give us one acre of ground, almost in the center of the town, and \$100,00 in cash. When I thought that my expectations were about to be realized, some of the members of the congregation became dissatisfied, and refused to pay their subscriptions, unless a church was built according to their peculiar notion, or taste. The other subscribers then refused to pay, unless the church was built in modern style, and thus I found that the enterprise was doomed to fail; and I became utterly discouraged, and felt that my work in Ashland was done.

Among the first members of the Ashland congregation were the Youngs, Millers, Swinefords, Stoughs, Crouses and others.



—ORATION—

Delivered by Special Request, before the Ashland Lyceum, at the Village of Ashland, O., some time during the years A. D. 1831 or '32.

“Brethren and Fellow Citizens:

I am indebted to the partiality of some of the members of the Ashland Lyceum, for the honor of addressing you under the present interesting circumstances. I am sensible of my inability to meet the just claims of this hour, and am confident that a person, more competent to the task, and better qualified to do justice to the occasion, might have been selected ; and under this conviction I could cheerfully have declined the present service.

But as some of you have been pleased to tender me this honor, it would have been at once ungrateful and disrespectful not to have accepted it ; and as I have every disposition to acquiesce in all reasonable requests of this kind, which can proceed from an association so laudable as that to which some of you belong, I conceive it to be my duty to attempt compliance, however humble in its nature that compliance may be.

We have convened here this evening, as you are aware, to celebrate the birthday of one of the brightest stars in the constellation of American worthies—that of the illustrious and immortal Washington, the father of his country. This distinguished personage, whose eminent services to our country we are about to recall to mind, briefly to portray their glorious results, and attempt a delineation of his consummate and inestimable character, has long since been numbered with the pious slumberers in the grave. Yet, he lives! lives in the hearts! lives in the affections! lives in the memories of every genuine son and daughter of our happy country, and of every true American patriot.

The Hero, the Patriot, the Sage of America is no more. Yet as long as the star-spangled banner waves triumphantly o’er the land of the free and the home of the brave—the mere mention of his name, his services, his virtues, will produce sensations the most fond and exhilarating, and cause the hearts of all to glow with gratitude, whose veins contain one drop of the dear, the noble, the precious blood of our brave and worthy ancestors.

George Washington, the friend of liberty, and the tyrant’s foe, appeared on this stage of action, on the 22nd day of February, A. D. 1732, at Bridges Creek, in the County of Westmoreland, in the State of Virginia. He was the third son of Augustine Washington, and a great-grandson of John Washington, a gentleman of the first respectability; who emi-

grated from the North of England, to the wide-spread forests of North America, about the year A. D. 1657, and settled on the very place where the brave defender of the rights of the people of this western world, was born.

It will not be required, nor will the brief space of time we design to occupy admit of our entering into a full account of the life of the savior of our country. We shall, therefore, only notice a few of the most striking particulars and incidents of his history. Little is known relative to the first fifteen years of his existence.

Having had the misfortune to lose a most kind and affectionate father, at a very early period of his life, our hero only received what was denominated an "English education," a term which excludes the acquisition of foreign or ancient languages.

But limited as his literary attainments may have been, he discovered at a very early period of life, a well cultivated intellect, and became not only highly useful, but was, in fact, one of the brightest ornaments of society.

Washington had scarcely reached his fifteenth year, ere he gave strong proof of military genius. His country was then engaged in a war against France and Spain. Roused, perhaps, by a spirit or thirst for military fame and glory, he urged most pressingly to be permitted to enter into the British navy, and his repeated solicitations were not abortive; the berth of a midshipman was soon obtained for

him. Prepared to enter on his naval career, he was induced to relinquish it, in obedience to the wishes of a fond and indulgent mother; much, however, against his own personal feelings. In the year 1751, in consequence of the demise of his brother, the office of Adjutant-General of the Virginia Militia, became vacant, and Mount Vernon, together with a large and valuable estate, came into the possession of our hero.

At this period the dense population of the colony made it expedient to form the militia corps into three divisions, and Washington, though but a youth, was appointed Major. He attended to his duty as an officer, with exemplary propriety and vigilance, and was highly esteemed by his fellow soldiers for his mildness and generosity.

About two years after this appointment, the encroachments of the French upon the western boundaries of the British Colonies, excited a general alarm in Virginia, so that it was deemed expedient to select and authorize a proper person to ascertain the truth of those rumors, and if found as reported, to demand them in the name of the King, to desist from the prosecution of designs, most unjust. Washington offered his services. To accomplish this object he had to pass through a great extent of country, almost entirely unexplored by his countrymen, and inhabited only by the savage aborigines, who were either hostile to the English or of doubtful attachment to them.

The dangers and fatigues of his mission did not, however, deter him in the least. The "noble youth" engaged in it with the utmost alacrity.

Having ascertained the disposition of the French, relative to the British Colonies, he returned, after an absence of a few months, to Williamsburg, Virginia. This laudable, but perilous enterprise, raised our hero in the public opinion, as well as in that of the Governor. His Journal, drawn up for the inspection of Lieutenant-Governor Dinwiddie, was published, and it strikingly demonstrated the solidity of his understanding, and the fortitude of his mind.

In consequence of the unjust encroachments of the French, it was deemed expedient to raise a regiment of three hundred men, to maintain the right of the British Crown. The command of this regiment was given to a gentleman of intelligence and respectability—a Mr. Fry, and the youthful Washington was appointed Lieutenant-Colonel. Prepared to defend the right of the British Crown, and ready to enter on their expedition, Providence was pleased to remove the Colonel—Mr. Fry, and our hero succeeded him in the command of his regiment. In this expedition against the French, our hero and his little army were successful. An attack was made upon them by the French, but scarcely since the days of Leonidas, and his three hundred deathless Spartans, had the sun beheld braver men.

With hideous whoops and terrific yells, the enemy came on like a host of tigers ; but, animated by their gallant chief—his noble warriors won the field.

In the year 1755, General Braddock appeared in America, at the head of two veteran regiments from Ireland. On his arrival he was joined by the independent and provincial corps of our country. Preparations were immediately made to proceed against Fort DuQuesne, but the want of wagons to convey their stores had almost proved an insurmountable obstacle to the expedition. In this emergency, Benjamin Franklin exerted his influence so effectually with his countrymen, that in a very short time the army was amply supplied. About this period, Washington was induced to resign his commission as Colonel. Being, however, warmly attached to a military life, and emulous to defend his country, he voluntarily served under Braddock as an extra aid-de-camp.

In proceeding against Fort DuQuesne, the prudence of our hero dictated to him the propriety and importance of cautioning his General against the arts and stratagems of their enemy ; but Braddock's ardent desire of conquest made him deaf to the timely voice of experience. He would not be taught how to fight by a young "Buckskin ;" and the consequences were most distressing.

The van-division of the army was unexpectedly attacked by an ambuscade of the French and Indians, and was totally defeated. The

unfortunate General was slain, and almost every officer whose duty compelled him to be on horseback, was either killed or wounded, except the brave Washington. And had it not been for the wisdom, the bravery, and the perseverance of our illustrious hero, the residue of the troops, in all probability, would have perished. The timely aid and attention afforded the remainder of the troops, immediately after the defeat, by the generous Washington, met with desired and universal approbation, and as a small remuneration for this distinguished service, he was appointed commander-in-chief of all the Colonial troops.

Immediately after this new arrangement with regard to the Colonial troops, our hero eminently distinguished himself by his consummate bravery, in the capture of Fort Duquesne. The enemy was ultimately defeated in several engagements, compelled to retreat far beyond the Colonial boundaries, and tranquility and security were restored again to the Colonies. About this time Washington resigned his commission, in consequence of the delicate state of his health, and retired to Mount Vernon. By care, and attention to himself for some time, he recovered his health again, and was subsequently married to the widow of Colonel Curtis, a lady of high respectability and accomplishments.

But no sooner had the war with the French closed, than the Colonies began to feel, with additional weight, the hand of British oppres-

sion. Not humbled, however, by injustice, nor crushed by severities, they put forth all their energies to render the Colonies a desirable home. The spread of innumerable sails upon the ocean, converted the mighty forests into most delightful and productive farms, founded cities, established literary institutions, and reared in every direction temples to the living God. The period was now rapidly approaching, in which measures the most unjust and tyrannical, were devised against the Colonies, but which, instead of humbling them, called forth the spirit of liberty and independence, and laid the foundation of our great and incomparable Republic.

The long line of British acts, designed to crush the Colonies, and keep them in servile subjection, passed as they were, in wilful ignorance of the feelings and powers of America, awakened the spirit of that revolution in which the illustrious Washington rendered to his country such memorable and important services. We deem it entirely unnecessary to enter into a detailed account of those most wrongful and arbitrary acts, which roused the noble spirit of our veteran ancestors, and made the wisdom of old England blush at her folly. Suffice it to say, they were such that no people could suffer, and live.

No alternative was left the fathers of our country, but that of slavery, or resistance by force of arms—thank heaven! they chose the latter. Measures were immediately adopted,

looking to the speedy training of the militia to the use of arms, the manufacture of gunpowder, and the collection of all kinds of military stores, and committees of public safety were appointed in all the towns in the province.

On the memorable 19th of April, 1775, the first blood of the war of the Revolution was shed, at Lexington, Massachusetts,—a war which raised the proud standard of liberty, and stimulated the inborn, the God-given principle of human liberty, in the bosom of every true American, and rested not, until the banner of freedom waved in triumph over the establishment of a free and independent government, in our heaven-favored America.

George Washington was appointed to the responsible position of Commander-in-Chief of the American forces, on the 10th day of May, 1775, which high trust he accepted with great diffidence.

Congress, on presenting our hero with his commission, unanimously resolved that they would maintain and assist him, and adhere to him with their lives and fortunes, in the holy cause of American Liberty.

Thus encouraged by that illustrious and patriotic body, the immortal Washington entered on the duties of his new office.

“Oh! Heavens! he cried, my bleeding country save!
Is there no hand on high to shield the brave!
Rise, fellow-men! your country is at stake!
Rise, Columbia’s sons, arise! awake!
For Liberty, we’ll wave the sword on high,

And swear for her to fight—with her to die!
He said, and on the battle-ground arrayed,
Were his countrymen, few, but undismayed."

Aided by his veteran and illustrious countrymen, the brave and intrepid champion of America engaged with alacrity in the deliverance of the land of his birth from British tyranny and oppression. His army was without proper discipline, often without sufficient military stores; in a word they labored under almost every difficulty. But encouraged by the hope of liberty, they persevered with undaunted zeal and fortitude, overcame every obstacle, surmounted every difficulty, and at length their dreadful enterprise was crowned with the most signal success.

We might here portray those tremendous and heartrending scenes which attended the revolution of our country; we might tell you of the piercing shrieks of the wounded, and the solemn and pathetic groans of the dying. We might picture to you the awful situations of the martyrs of liberty, who fell, and bled, and died on the fields of mortal strife, where there were no eyes to pity them, no sister to weep over them; where no gentle hand was present to ease the dying partner, or bind up the bleeding wounds—but we forbear. We might here proceed to recall to mind all the services which our own Washington rendered to his country's cause during the Revolutionary struggle, and the great services of those noble

foreigners who voluntarily came to our country, assisted in planting the tree of liberty, and nourished its growth with their own life-blood, but our time will not allow us to do this. Oh! while, however, we remember with the most profound gratitude, the invaluable services of the hero, and father of American freedom. let us not forget those of the generous and patriotic Lafayette; and those of the noble and brave DeKalb, who fell, a martyr in the cause of human liberty.

During the whole revolution of our country, Washington proved himself a soldier of pre-eminent worth and merit. In glancing over the history of our country, we see him at the head of our army; at the head of that convention that framed our excellent Magna-Charta, and at last, we see him, placed by the suffrages of a free people, in the high position of Chief Magistrate of our Nation.

Under Washington, as our leader, says a beautiful writer, we won our independence, formed our Constitution, established our Government! and what reward did he ask for these inestimable services? Did he ask a diadem? Did he lay his hand upon the Nation's treasury? Did he claim to be emperor of the new-born, independent, and free people? The nation that had risen up under his auspices, from a state of semi-serfdom, to the condition of personal liberty, and national independence? No, no; although first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen, he

sublimely retired to the peaceful and quiet occupation of rural life, content with the honor of having been instrumental in achieving the independence, and securing the happiness of his country.

There is no parallel in history to this ! By the side of Washington, Alexander is degraded to a selfish destroyer of his race ; Cæsar becomes the dazzled votary of power, and Bonaparte a baffled aspirant to universal dominion.

Washington is the illustrious personage whom a free and independent people delight to honor ! Washington is the name that will live through the ages of coming time, and be pronounced by freedom's children to the latest posterity, yea, till the mighty angel shall descend, and place one foot upon the sea, and the other upon the earth, and shall swear that time shall be no longer.

We promised briefly to portray the glorious results of the services of our hero, to our beloved country.

The services of Washington, and the veteran army under his command, were great, very great. They brought into existence, under God, the independence of our country ; they were the means of delivering the Colonies from the bands and fetters of British tyranny ; they tended to support and strengthen that glimmering taper of liberty, which, from a feeble spark dropped in the wilderness, soon rose to a blaze, the height and refulgence of which is seen by every nation under the wide-

spread canopy of heaven,—through the mists of despotism, brightening their political hemisphere. Their glorious light, the irresistible splendor of which is darting its rays into the ebony councils of despots, dazzling the owlish vision of tyrants, and casting into the shade the heretofore fascinating glitter of crowns and diadems.

The period, we believe, is not very remote, when the genius of liberty, which found no place to rest her weary feet, but in the mighty forests of North America, will hurl every monarch from his throne, cast every earth-born tyrant harmless at her feet; and when her proud standard shall wave triumphantly over every nation, and tongue, and people. There is no government under heaven that can compare with ours. Here, every man is a sovereign, enjoying equal rights, and equal privileges; here, every man may worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience; here, are prerogatives, which no other nation on earth can boast.

What effect ought those blessings, those high and inestimable, civil and political privileges, which were bought with the blood and treasure of our noble ancestors, have upon us? Ought they not serve to fill our hearts with deepest gratitude to Him who sways the sceptre of the universe, and determines the destiny of nations?

We now rejoice in the full and free possession of the glorious fruits of those labors, toils,

and sacrifices of the fathers of our grand country. But they, with but few exceptions, have gone to that bourne from which they cannot return. They have filled up the measures of their duties as citizens, and patriots, and have secured for posterity the rich boon of national freedom, and national glory. The remaining few, like thinly standing oaks, on our extended domain, weather-beaten and blanched by the pitiless hand of time, are the last evidences of the once formidable and towering greatness of the fathers of the revolutionary period. This remaining remnant of a once valiant people, are bending their way earthward, calmly expecting, ere long, to arrive at the silent and peaceful chamber of their departed comrades. It will be but a little while, and the vital air will be rejected by their organs of respiration, and the heart of the last soldier of the American Revolution will cease to beat.

We shall now attempt a brief delineation of the character of our own great Washington. To do justice to this, the greatest of earth's great men, would require the eloquence of a Demosthenes, or the more lofty flight of a Cicero. As a man, Washington was generous, frank, independent and sincere. Generous—his heart, his hand, his purse, were ever at the service of the needy. Frank—he was open and ingenious, his sentiments were ever undisguised, his language spoke correctly what he thought and felt; and his countenance was an index to his mind.

Truly may it be said of him, that he carried his heart in a silver vase, so that all could see it. His opinions he never attempted to conceal, his attachments and his dislikes, were, with equal freedom and sincerity, declared and independent. He had his partialities and predilections, every man must have them, for he cannot be brought, by any discipline whatever, to love that which is totally uncongenial to his tastes and habits of life, however much he may be inclined to cherish a proper deference towards others.

To all, our hero cheerfully paid the regard which the high stations he occupied, claimed; but only with such as his heart and feelings approved, did he share the social intercourse, or the endearments of friendship. And, surely, a man in public life, whilst he pays to all around him such attentions as the functions of his office involve, has a just right to select the individuals with whom he will share the social hour, or to whom he may commit the more sacred and retired feelings of his heart. And, sincere—whatever he said, he uttered from deep conviction, and on his every assurance, the firmest reliance might be placed.

As a Christian, Washington was fervent, holy, humble. His piety was the ardor of that unquenchable fire of love and trust, which the gospel enkindles in believing hearts. With him, religion was not a matter of mere profession and convenience; he seemed to live under its abiding and sanctifying influence:

indeed, it almost seems as if piety had been wrought into the very constitution of his noble nature ; its principles were the springs, its precepts the rule, and its objects, the end of all actions. He contemplated the character of the Supreme Being, and was attracted to it by its superlative purity.

“Oh, joy to the world ! the hour is come,
“When the nations to freedom awake ;
“When the royalists stand agape and dumb,
“And monarchs with terror shake !
“Over the walls of majesty,
“Upharsin’ is writ in words of fire,
“And the eyes of the bondsman, wherever they be,
“Are lit with wild desire.
“Soon shall the thrones that blot the world,
“Like the Orleans, into the dust be hurl’d,
“And the world roll on like a hurricane’s breath,
“Till the farthest slave hears what it saith :
“ ‘Arise, arise, be free !’ ”

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COMMISSION AS CHAPLAIN.


COPY OF ORIGINAL.

In the name and by the authority of the State of Ohio : Duncan McArthur, Governor, and Commander-in-Chief of said State. To Francis J. Ruth, Greeting :

It appearing to me that you are duly appointed Chaplain of the First Regiment,

First Brigade, and Eleventh Division, of the Militia of this State; and that special trust and confidence are reposed in your courage, activity and good conduct :

Now, know you, that by virtue of the powers vested in me by the Constitution and Laws of said State, I do by these presents Commission you as Chaplain of said Regiment, hereby authorizing and requiring you to discharge all and singular the duties and services appertaining to your said office, agreeable to Law; and to obey such instructions as you shall from time to time receive from your superior officers.

 In testimony whereof, I have hereunto subscribed my name, and caused the Great Seal of the State to be affixed, at Columbus, the 20th day of October, in the year of our Lord, 1832, and in the 57th year of the Independence of the United States of America.

By the Governor.

D. M. McARTHUR.

M. H. KIRBY, }
Sect'y of State. }

CHAPTER IV.

THE prospect of greater usefulness at other points, where I had been preaching, finally induced me to resign the Ashland, and connected congregations, and to accept a call to Bucyrus, and to remove to that place. I had preached somewhat regularly in Bucyrus since December, 1832, but did not organize our English Lutheran congregation there until the 10th of January, A. D. 1833. Some time before this latter date, I became acquainted with the Rev. John Stough, a German Lutheran minister, who resided a few miles distant from Bucyrus. This aged brother frequently assisted me on Sacramental occasions in my charge, until near his death, which occurred in A. D. 1845.

Father Stough, as he was familiarly called, was far advanced in life when I first became acquainted with him, but he yet retained a good memory, and a remarkable degree of

mental vigor, and a strong voice, as well. He was a godly man, a sound theologian, and a very pleasant speaker. He was the first regular Lutheran minister who crossed the Alleghany Mountains to preach the gospel in Ohio. Some time before his death he united with the English Lutheran Synod of Ohio and adjacent States, and was elected Senior of the Synod and Ministerium.

It may be interesting to give an account, in this place, of the organization of the first English Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Ohio and adjacent States.

At a meeting of the German Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Ohio, held at Lancaster, Ohio, on Trinity Sunday and following days, A. D. 1836, permission was given to form an English Synod within the bounds of the German Synod of Ohio. At a convention held by the English members then present, the English Synod of Ohio and adjacent States, was organized by the election of officers, and adjourned to hold its first regular session in Somerset, Ohio, on Sunday, the 6th of November, A. D. 1836.

Accordingly, on Saturday the 5th, a number of the brethren having assembled, the services preparatory to the administration of the Holy Communion were performed, and a sermon preached by Rev. Andrew Kuhn, on Acts, 17:30. In the evening divine services were held, and a discourse delivered by Mr. Solomon Ritz, on 1st Cor. 15:14. (From Minutes.)

On Sunday morning a crowded and attentive audience was assembled in the church, and the Holy Lord's Supper was administered to a large number of communicants, by Rev. Charles Henkel, pastor loci, and Rev. James Manning, President of the Synod. The Sacramental discourse was preached by Rev. E. Greenwald, on Luke, 22:19,20. In the afternoon, Rev. James Manning delivered the pastoral discourse, to a delighted audience; text, Isaiah, 40:11. In the evening Rev. Francis J. Ruth preached to a large audience, from 2nd Tim. 1:10.

On Monday, November 7th, A. D. 1836, at 9 o'clock, a. m., the ministers and lay delegates having assembled at the house of the pastor loci, they proceeded together from thence in procession to the church, where, immediately upon entering the house, they united in singing a hymn, and on bended knees joined in prayer with the president to implore the guidance and blessing of the Lord on the deliberations of Synod.

The roll having been called, the following brethren were found to be present :

I. ORDAINED MINISTERS.

Charles Henkel, Somerset, Ohio.

James Manning, Annapolis, Ohio.

John B. Reck, Shanesville, Ohio.

E. Greenwald, New Philadelphia, Ohio.

2. LICENSED CANDIDATES.

Francis J. Ruth, Bucyrus, Ohio.
 Elihu Rathbun, Saegerstown, Crawford co., Pa.
 Amos Bartholomew, Somerset, Ohio.
 Joseph A. Roof, Circleville, Ohio.
 Andrew Kuhn, Wooster, Ohio.
 Abraham Weil, Washington, Pa., was absent.

3. LAY DELEGATES.

The following lay delegates presented their credentials, and took seats as members of the Synod :

Chas. Manning, rep. cong's of Rev. C. Henkel.
 John Judy, jun., " " Rev. E. Greenwald.
 Wm. F. Moeller " " " A. Bartholomew
 Jacob Smyser, sr., " " " A. Kuhn.

The Synod, was, consequently, composed of thirteen members, nine ministers, and four lay delegates.

The president informed the convention that the time for which the former officers were elected, had expired, and that a new election of officers must now be held by ballot, according to the constitution, and appointed Rev. Elihu Rathbun and Wm. F. Moeller, Esq., tellers, to receive the votes ; whereupon the following result was declared :

Rev. James Manning, President ;
 " E. Greenwald, Secretary ;
 " Charles Henkel, Treasurer.

At this meeting of Synod I was examined by a committee appointed for that purpose, and recommended to the ministerium for ordi-

nation. The solemn ceremony of ordination was performed on Tuesday evening, November 8th, A. D. 1836, in the presence of a large and deeply interested congregation. The ordination sermon was preached by Rev. John Reck ; text, Ezekiel 47:8-9:

“Then said he unto me, these waters issue out toward the east country, and go down into the sea: which being brought forth into the sea, the waters shall be healed. And it shall come to pass, that everything that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the rivers shall come, shall live: and there shall be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters shall come thither: for they shall be healed; and everything shall live whither the river cometh.”

The ordination service was read by the president, Rev. James Manning, and the closing prayer was offered by Rev. Charles Henkel. The president and secretary, together with Revs. Henkel and Reck, performed the laying on of hands.

“’Tis not a cause of small import

“The Pastor’s care demands ;

“But what might fill an angel’s heart,

“And filled a Savior’s hands.”

“They watch for souls, for which the Lord

“Did heavenly bliss forego ;

“For souls which must forever live

“In rapture or in woe.”

“May they that Jesus, Whom they preach,

“Their own Redeemer see ;

“And watch Thou daily o’er their souls,

“That they may watch for Thee.”

COPY OF ORIGINAL.

Be it known to all to whom these presents shall come :

That the Reverend FRANCIS JACOB RUTH was solemnly ordained Pastor, by the English Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Ohio, and adjacent States, and is hereby fully authorized to perform all requisite ministerial acts.

In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand, and affixed the seal of the ministerium.

Done at Somerset, Ohio, this eighth day of November, in the year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and thirty-six.

[SEAL]

JAMES MANNING,

{ President of the Eng. Ev.
{ Luth'n Synod, of Ohio.

Attest : E. Greenwald, Sec.

In the Bucyrus congregation I had great success, more so than in any of the other congregations composing my charge.

Every winter from 1839, until I resigned the charge, my labors in catechising the young, and in making special efforts for the revival of religion in the congregation, were blessed of God in a remarkable degree, and large numbers were brought into the visible fold of Christ.

In the Spring of 1836, the congregation purchased a lot for a cemetery, and also a lot for a church building. This latter place was in the center of the town, and hence was well

situated for its purpose. A house of worship was accordingly erected, a brick building, large, substantial and commodious. This church was, however, not finished until some years after its erection, but it answered its purpose very well, for all that, and many were the souls which were delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son, within its walls.

In process of time we organized a Sunday School in the church, which elicited a great deal of interest at its commencement, and grew and flourished as long as I remained their pastor. Prayer meetings, and meetings for testimony were begun, in the early part of my ministry there, and were maintained to the end of my labors in that church. I can truly say that I had many joyful experiences amongst the people of that congregation; happy seasons, which I shall always recall with pleasure, while I live.

On the 9th of October, 1836, I was intermarried with Miss Louisa H. Hough, of Richland county, Ohio. This amiable and excellent lady, whose piety and devotion no one could call into question, was a helpmate to me, and for me, in very truth and deed. I am persuaded that very much of my success in the Bucyrus congregation, was owing to her fervent prayers, and truly godly example and influence.

We lived happily together for the space of nearly fifteen years, when it pleased our heav-

only Father to call her gentle spirit home to Himself. She fell asleep in Jesus on the 5th day of July, 1851, in the 32nd year of her age. This was a great loss to me. I felt that I was bereaved, indeed. I was left with two small sons to care for, and knew not how I should meet the added responsibilities arising out of my now changed circumstances. But God enabled me, by his free and omnipotent grace, to resign myself wholly to his will. It seemed to me that I could hear the Spirit of God whispering in my ear, the words of the Evangelical Prophet: "Who is he that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God."

I shall ever thank and praise our God and Father in Heaven, that He gave me such a devoted companion.

A POEM BY MRS. R. T. ELDREDGE, ON THE
DEATH OF MRS. LOUISA RUTH, FIRST
WIFE OF FRANCIS. J. RUTH.

"O, breathe her name gently—in low pensive tone,
The tear of affection to bright eyes will start!
O, shed not a tear—Oh, hush not a moan,
Jesus wept o'er the dead! tears lighten the heart.
O, why do the fairest fade soonest from earth?
By the hand of affection unceasingly nursed,
Warm friends may be near from the hour of their
birth,
But the heart, the tried heart with sorrow may burst,
Like a rose-tree that's trained with unceasing care,

And blossoms with beauty and fragrance awhile,
'Twas thus that she drooped in this cold world of care,
And a fond mother weeps o'er the grave of her child.
'Twould seem the death-angel stood near from her
birth,
(So lovely, so fragile, so gentle she seemed;)
To bear her away from this cold heartless earth,
To the home of her Father, where joy reigns supreme.
O, 'tis well that a few of this cold earth is given,
Where smiles are so full of affection's pure light,
They point our thoughts to yon blissful heaven,
Where hearts are ne'er touched by grief's chilling
blight.
Farewell, sweet Louisa, may thy memory linger—
In the hearts of the few who can dream of thy
worth,
Till the life pulse is stilled by death's icy finger—
Then they'll meet in heaven beyond this cold earth."

I continued a widower until the 7th of June, A. D. 1853, when I was married to Miss Leah H. Hill. With this devoted woman I have lived up to the time of this writing. God has been pleased to honor our union by the birth of two sons, who are living to comfort and care for their parents, now in the decline of their earthly pilgrimage.

May those sons, who yet survive, ever trust in their father's God, and ever strive to so live, amidst the numerous and ever-varying conflicts of this militant state, so that when both they and their parents shall together sleep in the dust of the earth, we all may meet and greet on the "ever green shore,"—"where the

wicked cease from troubling ; and where the weary be at rest."

"We let the tender office long engage
To rock the cradle of reposing age ;
With lenient arts extend a mother's breath,
Make languor smile, and smooth the bed of death ;
Expose the thought, explain the asking eye,
And keep awhile one parent from the sky."

• During the early part of my ministry in the Bucyrus church, a young man, Mr. Abraham H. Myers, was converted, and soon after this change became impressed that he ought to devote his life and energies to the work of the ministry. He did not confer with flesh and blood, but consented at once, to obey the heavenly calling ; and so soon as the necessary arrangements could be made, he began the work of preparation for the sacred office. In due time Bro. Myers was received as a member of the English Evangelical Lutheran Synod, and labored mostly in Ashland and Wayne counties. Bro. Myers was a man of considerable ability, was very energetic, and possessed an indomitable will. Hence, whatsoever he undertook, he would not rest until the object was accomplished. He died in the gospel harness, at Rowsburg, Wayne county, Ohio, in the prime of life, and it was said, most triumphantly—and was buried in the cemetery near Bucyrus.

The following incident may be given here. It was in the year A. D. 1838, perhaps, that certain laborers in the employ of Mr. Abraham

Halm, of Bucyrus, while excavating a water-course in the vicinity of the village, found the greater part of the skeleton of a mastodon. This skeleton was particularly interesting, and important to science, as the head and skull bones were perfect in their parts, and furnished the only known specimen from which a correct idea could be obtained respecting the massive and singularly shaped head of this animal. The horizontal length of this skull was three feet and three inches ; and the perpendicular height three feet and two and one-half inches. The weight of the skull and upper jaw was 160 pounds. The length of the back and molar tooth was seven and a-half inches. The weight of the lower jaw was seventy-seven pounds, and this added to the weight of the skull and upper jaw, made the weight of the entire head, 287 pounds. These bones were subsequently sold to some English gentlemen, who designed them for the British museum, in London.

The English Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Ohio and adjacent States, met in Millersburg, Holmes county, Ohio, in the month of November, A. D. 1839.

It was generally understood among the ministers composing this body, that there was not as much unanimity of sentiment amongst them as could have been desired ; this was particularly true in regard to the relation subsisting between the mother Synod and this English offspring. Some of the brethren felt anxious

to separate entirely from the control of the German, or mother Synod; for the English Synod was, practically, but a branch of the German body, and to unite with the general Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the United States. Others, and the members of the German Synod generally, were opposed to the measure. The minority of our own Synod, the English, were disposed to bind us still more closely, even to the German or mother Synod. Under these circumstances, a committee was, on motion, appointed; consisting of three ordained ministers, who were charged with the duty of examining the constitution of the Synod, and of suggesting such changes therein, to the next meeting of the Synod, as they, in their judgment, might deem necessary and important. At the next regular meeting of the Synod, the above named committee made report of their work, and the report was, on motion, adopted by a considerable majority.

After the adoption of the report on the revision of the constitution, the following resolution was also adopted:

“Resolved, that this Synod is, and of right ought to be, free and independent, subject to the control and jurisdiction of no other Ecclesiastical body.” The adoption of this resolution caused a separation, of course. The minority continued in the branch Synod. English, what there was left of it, and the majority called their Synod, after the separation,—“The English Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Ohio and

adjacent parts." This Synod shortly afterwards united with the general Synod of our church, and from the day of its new departure, onward, the Synod began to increase in numbers, and in influence, and to such an extent that all concerned could not but see and feel that the independence which it had assumed, was at once wise and right, and good. And besides, it was evident also, that the churches and people belonging to this Synod were decidedly well pleased with the separation that had been effected.

The following action of this Synod, at its meeting in Washington, Guernsey county, Ohio, shows that the divorcement of the English from the German Lutheran Synod, had been secretly made the occasion for the indulgence, and subsequent manifestation of unbrotherly, not to say unchristian feelings, on the part of the latter body.

"Resolved, That inasmuch as the German Joint Synods of Ohio treated our worthy delegate, Rev. Dr. Hamilton, with contempt, we, the members of the English Evangelical Lutheran Synod, cannot condescend to have any further intercourse with that Synod, until a suitable apology be made to this Synod. Unless this is done, we cannot send or receive any delegate, or any minutes, to or from that Synod."

At the annual convention of the English Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Ohio, and adjacent parts, at Washington, Guernsey

County, Ohio, on Friday the 14th of October, A. D., 1842, formal action was taken for the first time, looking to the establishment of a Literary and Theological Institution in Ohio. The action was recommended by committee No. 1, to whom had been referred the president's annual report; the third item of which referred to the expediency of uniting with the Synod of the West, in sustaining a theological institution. Following is the report of the committee on that item, together with other matter in their hands on that subject :

“It is the opinion of your committee that it is not expedient, at this time, to unite with our brethren of that Synod in their enterprise. The reasons why we cannot unite with them are found only in the circumstances by which we are surrounded. We entertain for our beloved brethren of that Synod sentiments of profound respect and fraternal affection. We think we can accomplish more for the glory of God by locating an institution in Ohio. If, however, our brethren of the Synod of the West will unite with us, we will cheerfully receive them on the same terms proposed to us. The committee would now recommend the adoption of the following :

“Resolved, That in humble reliance upon the Lord Jesus Christ, and alone for His glory and honor, we, now in Synod assembled, do

ordain and establish a Literary and Theological Institution.”

Respectfully submitted,

GEO. LEITER,
R. WEISER,
H. BISHOP,
J. ROLLER,
D. TULLES.

The above resolution was unanimously adopted, and a committee of four persons appointed to draft and present to this body, a constitution for the Literary and Theological Institute above mentioned. The following persons were appointed: Revs. R. Weiser, Geo. Leiter, H. Bishop and W. A. Wadsworth.

The above institution was located, in the first place, at Wooster, Wayne county, Ohio, and Rev. Ezra Keller, D. D. of Hagerstown, Maryland, was called to take charge of it.

Through the influence of Brother Keller, and certainly for good and sufficient reasons, it was subsequently removed to Springfield, Ohio, in A. D. 1844.

A charter for this institution was obtained of the Legislature of Ohio, in the winter of 1844-5, under the corporate name of “The Board of Directors of Wittenberg College.” Dr. Keller was permitted to manage this young school of the Prophets but for a short time. He died in December, 1848. He was succeeded by Rev. Samuel Sprecher, D. D., LL. D., who is still connected with the Institution.

The London congregation, near Shelby, was

organized in the autumn of A. D. 1833. I had however preached more or less in that community since the Spring of 1832. Soon after the organization of this church, the congregation purchased a lot of ground, about one mile south of the village of London, for the burial of the dead, and a site for a house of worship. In due time a church edifice was erected on the ground, a frame, two stories high, with galleries on three sides; but the building was never finished in that form, but was cut down to one story in height, and finished in a neat manner and in modern style. This congregation soon began to grow, and prosper in every way. Prayer meetings and preaching services were usually well attended; Sabbath Schools were introduced, and great interest was manifested in the cause, both by the more aged, and by the young; and the work prospered greatly, and much good was accomplished. My efforts in catechising the young in this congregation were especially blessed of God. I confirmed, on one occasion, fifty-two catechumens, the greater part of whom were young men and young women.

The communion season, on that occasion, was one of peculiar interest, and peculiar blessing. The day, itself, was one of exceptional beauty and loveliness, the assemblage of people was remarkably large, and a lively interest in the religious services and exercises of the occasion was clearly manifested by all present. A visible seriousness pervaded the entire con-

gregation, and evidences of the presence and power of the Holy Spirit were alike seen and felt. This meeting was held in the church, several years prior to the time when the house was changed into a one-story building, and finished as it is now.

The following incident occurred on that occasion : A certain man, in order to make room for others, climbed up the side of the house, and seated himself on one of the beams that supported the framework of the gallery. The sermon delivered on that occasion was very practical in its nature, and was pronounced with such remarkable power and pathos, that all hearts present were thrilled by the truth, and overborne by the irresistible logic of the preacher. The audience seemed to be spell-bound ; sighs, and tears, and groans, indicated the pungency of the sermon, and pending that baptism of power from on high, the accommodating neighbor, who had climbed up upon the beam of the house, surprised the entire audience by his vehement outcries, as if in great distress, his utterances meanwhile being commingled with ejaculatory prayer. That was a moment of supreme religious interest, the like of which is rarely witnessed, even by the most pious, devoted and successful ambassadors of Christ.

In the early part of my labors in the London congregation, I met with some opposition occasionally, from members of other denominations. The Baptists contended, of course,

for immersion, as the only proper mode of Christian baptism. The undue interference of this people, with the concerns of our church and people in that community, made it necessary that I should preach a sermon on the subject of baptism; especially on the subjects, and the mode of baptism; and which I also did in due time, and that single discourse seemed to answer every purpose, for the Baptist people in the neighborhood were never heard to criticise my discourse afterward, and they soon left for other parts.

The Church of God, so called, better known however, as Winebrennarians, came into that neighborhood also, and commenced to preach their peculiar tenets, and to operate their peculiar methods for proselyting members from other churches.

A favorite and ever-recurring theme of discourse, and discussion, both in public and in private, was "Sinless Perfection."

This idle notion I also felt myself called upon to expose, and to warn the people against the insidious error. The consequence was that in a short time afterwards, those families, nearly all of them, left that community also, to seek, perhaps, a more congenial religious climate.

Universalists, too, were found in the vicinity round about London, but the conduct of some of their number was so glaringly inconsistent, even with the dictates of common sense, that they might be said to have done neither much

harm, nor much good.

In reflecting upon my labors amongst that people, I feel that I have good and sufficient reasons to believe that my work there has not been in vain; but that I was humbly instrumental, under God, in accomplishing some good.

The first and leading members of the Lutheran church at London, were Mr. John Hershizer, Esq., Mr. John Snider, Mr. A. Yiengst, the Wisers, Mr. Abraham Bushey, Sr., and Mr. A. Hershizer. Much is due to Mr. John Hershizer, for the early prosperity, and the subsequent permanent growth and development of that church and congregation.

The pleasant and profitable experiences in the pastoral relation, do not belong solely or especially to any one christian minister; but are possessed and enjoyed by every true and faithful shepherd alike.

While the pastoral relation has its peculiar perplexities and trials, it has also its peculiar advantages and blessings; and the remembrance of these things is always attended with pleasure and delight. The mutual confidence and affection which so naturally arise between a faithful pastor and an equally faithful people, are things which are not forgotten, when the relation which gave them birth ceases to exist in a formal manner.

Memory clings to those virtues with peculiar tenacity; and especially is this the case in instances where those moral graces have been

strengthened and matured by years of time, and tested, withal, by the numerous and varying trials, and sorrows which are incident to this inconstant life.

The Christian minister never, really, outlives his recollections of the places where, and the people amongst whom he was called to exercise the functions of his high and holy vocation. He loves to recall, and dwell upon the numerous and ever interesting scenes, and happy experiences which occurred during the years of his most active service in the vineyard of the Lord. The lines of the poet very aptly express the true status of his mind in this respect :

“Still o’er those scenes my memory wakes,
And fondly broods with miser care ;
Time but the impression deeper makes,
As streams their channels deeper wear.”

The Sulphur Springs congregation was organized in A. D. 1834. They worshipped for several years in either private houses or in the village school house, when it could be had for that purpose. But in process of time our people in that community became strong enough numerically, and financially, to build a commodious frame church in the place, and to dedicate it to the service of God, free from debt.

In this congregation there was maintained, for a number of years together, a model prayer meeting, and a model Sunday school. The members of the church were remarkably punctual in their attendance upon the public

means of grace, and were all disposed to do what they severally could for the advancement of the cause of God.

During one of our protracted meetings, in the early history of this church, a certain gentleman, whose name was Patrick McIntire, an aged man, who had been born and reared in the Roman Catholic faith, was, with his whole family, converted, and brought into the church. Mr. McIntire was utterly ignorant of letters or books, and had spent the greater part of his more active life in the occupation of a seaman or sailor. His conversion occurred when he was past sixty years of age. He was gifted in a high degree with a good memory, with great kindness of heart, and with remarkable readiness of speech. But he was especially gifted in prayer, in the act of which he was always earnest in spirit, and appropriate in thought and language. Father McIntire, as he was familiarly called, became very useful in the church and in the community, and was elected as an elder of the church, which office he magnified by a consistent conversation, to the end of his life.

Mr. James Burk, a citizen of Sulphur Springs, and a hatter by occupation, who was much addicted to the excessive use of ardent spirits, was also, at one of our revival meetings, converted to God, and received into fellowship with the church. He subsequently lived a life of sobriety, doing justly, and loving mercy, and walked humbly with his God.

His case was a marked illustration of the truth of the proposition, that the grace of God imparted in the work of regeneration, is a sure cure, if not the only certain remedy, for confirmed inebriation.

Mr. Burk, having no family or friends to provide for, left what property he had managed to save, to the Sulphur Springs congregation ; and having proven himself faithful, even unto death, we may hope that he has obtained the promised crown of life.

Among the early members of this church, I may mention Messrs. John G. Stough, Isaac Rice, John G. Fry, Horatio Markley, and Andrew Hess, all of whom were active members of the organization, each contributing his appropriate share towards the furtherance of the common cause which they had severally espoused. These brethren, with others, were uniformly very kind to me ; but Brother John G. Stough, who sat under my preaching for about twenty consecutive years, was especially thoughtful of, and helpful to me, and to my family. From him I received much, and often very timely encouragement, during the early days of our association. He often proved himself to me a friend in time of need.

"Friendship's an abstract of love's noble flame,
'Tis love refin'd, and purg'd from all its dross,
The next to angel's love, if not the same,
As strong in passion is, though not so gross ;
It ante-dates a glad eternity,
And is a heaven in epitome."

Some time during the year A. D. 1834, I organized the congregation known as the Myers Church, distant about three miles west from Shelby, Richland county, Ohio. In a short time our people here built a small log church, on a part of their cemetery ground.

Here I catechised the young, and also conducted special efforts with a view to the promotion of religious revival among the people of the community; and those meetings were attended with encouraging success, and numerous accessions were made to the church. Prayer meetings were, in due time, commenced and sustained in the congregation, and Sabbath School instruction was given, also, and the work of the Lord was prospered in that place. As there were some few persons in that neighborhood who could not understand the English language well enough to profit by English preaching, arrangements were made by which the services of Rev. Andrew Kuhn were secured, and he preached in connection with me for several years, in the German language, and thus all parties were accommodated. The first and leading members of this organization were, Messrs. Wm. Creager, Jno. Dull, J. Rex, F. Toney, John Snyder, and others.

The Mount Bethel congregation was organized, if I am not mistaken, about the year A. D. 1833, by the Rev. D. Schue, a German Lutheran minister. This congregation, when I first became acquainted with it, worshipped in

a log church, situated about four miles south-east of Shelby, Ohio.

I took charge of this congregation some time during the year 1834, and reorganized the church. A short time after I had taken charge of that people, a desire began to be expressed by some to have preaching occasionally, at least, in the German language. Arrangements were made accordingly, and the services of Rev. A. Kuhn were secured, and we preached alternately, each once every four weeks, he in the German, and myself in the English language. After laboring amongst that people for several years, I proposed to hold a series of meetings, for the special purpose of securing a revival of religion. I knew that I should meet with some opposition from certain brethren in the church, but being convinced that it was my duty to make such an effort, I consulted the council on the subject, and they consented that I might proceed to hold such a meeting, provided, however, that I would preach only Lutheran doctrine. I consented to those terms, of course, and accordingly I announced the opening of such an effort, and exhorted the people, both saints and sinners, to prepare themselves for attendance upon the meetings, not only, but also for the coming of the Lord, among us, in awakening and converting power. In due time the meeting was commenced, and I was assisted in the work by Rev. Kuhn. The people turned out to the meetings en masse, and with marked in-

terest. The effort began about midweek, and on Sabbath following I preached a discourse on the necessity of regeneration, and pressed the subject home to every heart present. One of the elders of the church sat immediately in front of me, and I noticed that he became very uneasy under the sermon. His restlessness increased as I proceeded with my remarks, until he seemingly could endure no more, when he arose in his place, and remarked : "Brother Ruth, you are not preaching Lutheran doctrine ;" and I replied, "Yes, sir, my brother, this is Lutheran doctrine, pure and unmixed, and it is Bible doctrine, too, and if you will sit down and wait, I will show you that this is Lutheran doctrine." The elder was greatly agitated, but he sat down, and I proceeded with my discourse. But I had not gone far before the elder rose up a second time, and protested that I was not preaching Lutheran doctrine, he "knew what Luther taught," he could not be deceived, and he wanted to hear no more of my preaching ; and suiting his actions to the word, he took his hat and started for the door, and standing on the threshold, he turned and faced the congregation, and making a low bow to us all, he bade us farewell, and left the church, and never entered it again afterwards.

There were others, of the older class of people, who also opposed both the doctrines we preached, and the methods which we employed

for the purpose of developing the work of the Lord. Notwithstanding the opposition that secretly existed to our meetings, the effort resulted most gloriously. A large number of persons, of all ages, were converted to God, and united with the church. There were also a number of persons who had belonged to the church for years past, who for the first time in their lives were led to embrace religion experimentally.

One aged member, who was laboring under conviction, approached Brother Kuhn and myself, in front of the church, and inquired, with evident emotion: "Men and brethren, what must I do to be saved?" I replied, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." It was at this meeting, I think, that Thomas Hill was converted. He soon after went to Wittenberg College, and prepared himself for the ministry. He entered the Lutheran ministry, but some years after went into the Presbyterian Church, and is laboring there still. This, Mount Bethel Church, prospered very encouragingly, and many of its members were pious and active christians, honoring their profession by a godly walk and conversation. Among the first members of this organization were, Messrs. A. Myers, A. Eiler, John Rice, Lewis Hill, Sen., D. Flory, Wm. Feigner, Jacob Cannel, J. Raub, Christian Wetz, and Jeremiah Kirkpatrick.

The Spring Mill congregation was organized in 1838. The place of worship was a school

house, situated about three quarters of a mile south from the Spring Mill. The house was large and commodious, and the audiences, generally, also large, and remarkably attentive to the preached word. There was also a Methodist organization in the same community, and the two societies occupied the same house alternately, and seemed to live and labor together very harmoniously. The Methodist ministers held a meeting of some two weeks, continuous, in the place, but the effort did not prove to be successful, and they closed the meetings feeling no little discouraged and disappointed.

Some time afterwards I was requested to commence a similar meeting, and after laboring hard for several days, I discovered that the Lord was about to revive his work amongst us. The blessing soon came; came with peculiar freshness and power, and twenty-two souls were hopefully converted, and added to the church, as trophies of redeeming grace.

During this meeting we had a family baptism, such as does not often occur in this part of the country. A man and his wife were converted, and they became impressed with the duty of consecrating their entire family to God, in the ordinance of christian baptism. They accordingly desired me to come to their house and attend to the administration of that rite. I acceded to their wishes, and baptized all their children, ten in number. Those parents seemed to be determined to make a thorough work of their new departure. They

were not content with making a bare profession of religion, nor with striving, alone, to make heaven their final home ; they would have their children share with them the present blessings of grace and salvation, and to rejoice with them, at last, in the world of glory. Surely those go most certainly to heaven, who are most deeply concerned to have their children, their friends, and their neighbors, in the ark with them !

At his subsequent appointment, our Methodist brother took occasion to say to the people, concerning the meetings which had been held there : "We Methodists shook the bushes, and the Lutherans gathered the birds." The brother was mistaken, however, in his judgment of the case ; for it had required a great effort on our part, to agitate the bushes, before the birds came flying into camp.

The Spring Mill congregation in time began to grow, and flourish, and ultimately succeeded in erecting a fine church edifice, five miles northwest from Mansfield, on the Shelby road. Among the first members of this organization, were Messrs. C. Flory, David Berger, Samuel Startzman, Joseph Welch and John Wise.

In the Spring of A. D. 1841, Brother Joshua Crouse came to see me at the Myers Church, with a view of securing my services occasionally, in preaching in his neighborhood. He represented the community as being almost entirely destitute of all public means of grace. The place is in Auburn township, Crawford

county, about one mile northwest from the old village of DeKalb. I agreed to visit the place, and sent an appointment to that effect, with the brother. In due time I visited the neighborhood, and preached to the people, on a week-day evening. From what I could see and hear, respecting the prospect of building up a church in that community, I was very favorably impressed. Hence I continued to visit the place, at intervals of from three to four weeks or more, for several months, but only during the week. In the course of time, however, I was able to preach there on the Sabbath day, generally. The place of worship was a regular log cabin school house, the first erected in the district.

I had, in some way learned, prior to my first visit in that community, that Brother Crouse was laboring under serious impressions that he ought to prepare himself for the work of the ministry. Hence when I first visited him at his house, I sought an opportunity to have an interview with him on the subject. The interview revealed the fact that he had serious thoughts upon that subject; that he had always, even from his earliest recollection, cherished the idea that he would, some time in life, devote himself to the work of the ministry; that his impressions in that direction had become very strong of late, and that he felt very unhappy at times, because his life was not in accord with his convictions of right and duty. He assured me also that he was fully persuad-

ed that if he should decide to follow any other employment, as a life-work, save that of preaching the gospel, he should never be a happy man. I was thoroughly convinced that the brother was called of God to the work of the ministry, and I encouraged him all that I could, advising him to enter at once upon a course of study preparatory to his entering into the work of the Gospel in the near future. In due time I furnished him with books, such as I thought would be proper for him to study, and thus I superintended his reading for several years. Having a good mind and a ready flow of language, the brother, by close application to study, was enabled in a short time to preach very acceptably and successfully. He assisted me in my protracted efforts, and his labors were eminently effective. He took charge of one of my congregations, and also assisted me in others, for the space of two years or more, even before he was regularly authorized to preach. At the meeting of the English Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Ohio, at Wooster, Wayne county, Ohio, in September A. D. 1844, Brother Crouse was, after passing a very credible examination, duly licensed to preach the gospel. His progress in the whole work of preparation and preaching, was in every way encouraging; remarkable even, and he soon became much beloved by the people in general, but particularly so by the people of the Lutheran Church, and was

generally regarded as one of our most able ministers of that day.

In the month of February, A. D. 1842, a most remarkable awakening occurred amongst the young people in the school which was then being taught by Bro. J. Crouse, in his own district. That work of grace permeated the entire community, and prepared the way, and furnished the material for the permanent organization of a Lutheran Church in that community; and such an organization was effected during the summer of A. D. 1842. The organization was called the "Oakland English Evangelical Lutheran Church."

In this place, as had been my practice elsewhere, I catechised the young, and held frequent special meetings, looking to the revival of the work of the Lord among the people. Here a circumstance occurred that I am disposed to mention in this place. A certain man, whose wife and daughter belonged to my catechetical class in that community, seeing that they were concerned about their soul's salvation, became very much enraged, and determined that his family should no more attend these services. He declared that he would give the best cow on his farm if I had never come into that neighborhood. The next morning, however, he told his wife that he was determined to go to the school house himself, and see what was going on there. Having been advised of his conduct before his arrival at the place of worship, I watched him closely

while I was preaching. After preaching I invited all present, who felt the need of salvation, and who desired to be instructed and prayed for, to come forward and occupy a certain seat. Several persons responded to the invitation, and when the services were over, and I had dismissed the congregation, and was in the act of leaving the house, I saw this man still in his place, and he seemed to be in distress. I approached him, and inquired how he was feeling. He immediately replied, "not very well." I saw at once that he was under conviction, and I told him so. He then asked me to remain with him a few moments, and pray for him. In the evening he was again present, and in a short time afterward, he, with a part of his family, united with the church. Thus the man was permitted to keep his cow, not only, but to enjoy besides, a bright hope of heaven, with all its riches, and glory and blessedness.

The Oakland congregation having taken its rise amid divine displays of awakening and converting power, it prospered from the very day of its ecclesiastical birth. Both a prayer meeting and a Sabbath School had been established and maintained in the community, even before I began to visit the place, and both of those forms of Christian work and worship, were largely, if not entirely due to the religious zeal, energy and enterprise of our dear brother, J. Crouse. Among the first members of the Oakland Lutheran Church, were the

Crouses, the Eckises, the Handleys, the Cahills, and others.

The following incident may be given here, to illustrate the difficulties with which we ministers had to contend during the early history of our church in northern Ohio. The new departure taken, by the introduction of prayer meetings, and revival efforts, provoked, in many localities, a great deal of bitter feeling, not only, but of actual opposition, and threatened personal injury.

During one of my protracted meetings in a certain church, I was being assisted by Rev. J. Crouse, and it soon became evident that the people were waking up to a sense of their danger, and duty. There lived in that community a man whose name was Diehl. He professed to be a member of the German Reformed Church, but he was a very careless and wicked man, and held no formal connection with any visible church organization. Besides, he was violently opposed to revival meetings, and especially to the use of the so-called mourner's bench. Now, it so happened that when the anxious were invited, on a certain evening, to come to the altar of prayer, two of Mr. Diehl's daughters appeared amongst the inquiring also. By some means Mr. Diehl was informed of the movement of his daughters, and he became very much enraged about the matter, and when they returned home after the close of the services, he refused to let them enter the house that night,

and they were compelled to seek shelter for the night among their neighbors. The next morning Mr. Diehl was up early, and out among his neighbors, venting his bitterness against the meeting, and against the preachers particularly. He swore by everything sacred that he would go to the meeting house himself that day, and if the preachers persuaded his girls to come to that mourner's bench again, he would "thrash" both of them, and affirmed that he was able to do that very thing. We were informed of his conduct, and cautioned against the possibility that he might attempt to execute his threats.

At the appointed hour for public worship, we repaired to the church and proceeded with the usual exercises; and sure enough, Mr. Diehl made his appearance among us also, and took a seat near the entrance door, and next to the aisle, a center aisle, and there he sat, the very picture of a demon. It was in the month of February, and the weather was chilly. He had no coat on, his pantaloons legs within his boot tops, his shirt sleeves rolled up above his elbows, and a home-made, broad-rimmed hat on his head, and this he kept on during the services. It was Brother Crouse's turn to preach that morning, and when he concluded his discourse, I gave a word of exhortation, and invited all present, who felt concerned about their soul's salvation, to come to the altar of prayer, and a large number came forward, and among them the Misses Diehl. When their father

saw this he rose up and stepped out into the aisle, and menaced with his fists, and gritted his teeth, and began to move slowly towards us. At this point I called upon Brother Crouse to lead us in prayer, saying, "the very 'Diehl' is in the house." The people at once fell upon their knees, and Brother Crouse stepped forward, and kneeled down in the mouth of the aisle, and prayed especially for the poor, miserable creature before him; asking God to vindicate his cause, by converting the enraged demoniac, and that the man might become peaceful, and calm, and rational, that the people might have proof of the power of God to subdue, and save even the worst of sinners. The poor man's courage utterly failed him, and before Brother Crouse had concluded his wonderful prayer, Mr. Diehl turned away and left the house, and never afterwards gave us any more trouble. That little episode, instead of injuring the interests of that meeting, served rather to accelerate the good cause, and the work of the Lord went on gloriously.

In the providence of God, it has been my privilege, during my long service in the active work of the ministry, to give encouragement to a number of young men to prepare themselves to preach the gospel. Revs. A. H. Myers, C. Culler, I. Culler, J. Crouse, J. Ruhl, J. Heckenleible, Thomas Hill, Jacob Culler, C. S. Ernsberger, and E. Sheneberger; these all went out from under my ministry, and some of them I had instructed specially, in the doc-

trines and duties of our holy Christianity. Brother John Ruhl was a young man of marked piety and devotion, and great hopes were entertained for his future usefulness in the cause of God. He had fitted himself for the foreign mission work of our church, but he was not permitted to enter upon the work. He died while traveling through the churches raising funds to defray his expenses to, and support while on a foreign field. His mortal remains were buried at Springfield, Ohio.

The following incident will serve to illustrate the circumstances under which many of our strongest and most efficient churches of to-day, took their rise, forty and fifty years ago.

In the early Spring of A. D. 1841, I assisted Rev. P. P. Lane in a protracted meeting in the village of Plymouth, Richland county, Ohio. I remained with Brother Lane about one week, preaching daily, morning and evening. On the evening after the inauguration of President Harrison, some boys outside the church we were occupying, began to throw up fire balls into the air, simply as a matter of innocent diversion, perhaps, but the circumstance created some confusion in the audience for a few moments, some supposing the church to be on fire. After the sermon, Brother Lane delivered a powerful exhortation, and a scene ensued, such as I had never witnessed before, nor have I seen the like since that time. There were fifty anxious souls came forward for instruction, and the prayers of God's people there

present, and some twenty-five backsliders arose at their respective places, and acknowledged their delinquencies, and asked pardon from all present for their past indifference, and negligence. The result of that meeting was glorious, laying the foundation and furnishing the material for an English Lutheran Church in that beautiful village.

A desire began to be cherished by our brethren living in the northwestern counties of Ohio, to have a new Synod formed, embracing those counties. The principal reason for wishing the formation of a new Synod, was that the distance and the expense in attending upon the meetings of Synod would by that means be greatly lessened; and as the new body would, for a while at least, be comparatively small, and could therefore be entertained in a larger number of places, and thus the good influence exerted by those ecclesiastical gatherings, would be shared by a larger number of our people. Hence at the meeting of the English Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Ohio, and adjacent parts, at Washingtonville, Columbiana county, Ohio, the subject of a new Synod was brought up and vigorously discussed, and the result was that permission was granted to brethren living in the northwestern counties of the State, to withdraw for the purpose of organizing a new Synod. The brethren accordingly withdrew, and proceeded at once to organize the new body. These transactions took place on the 8th day of June, A. D. 1847. The

Synod was organized by electing the usual officers, viz: Rev. F. J. Ruth, President, Rev. J. H. Hoffman, Secretary, and Rev. J. Seidel, Treasurer. The other brethren who were present and assisted in organizing the new Synod, were Revs. George Hammer, Andrew Kuhn, and J. Crouse. Brother Crouse, however, did not unite with the new organization at that time, for the reason that his ordination had already been appointed to take place on the evening of that day, in the presence of the old Synod.

The new body was, by the unanimous consent of its founders, called "The Wittenberg Synod." Rev. J. Crouse, was on motion appointed by the brethren present to report the action of our meeting to the old body; and after hearing said report, a motion of congratulation was passed by the mother Synod, with a great deal of earnest enthusiasm. The second session of Wittenberg Synod was held in Tiffin, Seneca county, Ohio, commencing June 17th, A. D. 1848. At this meeting of the new Synod, a number of accessions were received and added to the clerical roll of the body, and among them Rev. J. Crouse, who presented a letter of transference and recommendation from the old Synod.

The life of a pioneer minister, forty, fifty years ago, was not, all things considered, the most desirable and pleasant of lives. Many trials and hardships had to be met, and if these could not, in some way, be over-mastered, then

they had to be endured, as best one could endure them. Of these difficulties, their number and their nature, no one can form a correct conception, who has not learned to understand them by personal experience. The roads in the new settlements of northwestern Ohio, where there were roads, were generally in very poor condition, and in certain seasons of the year, they were well-nigh impassable. Ministers were frequently compelled to lodge in unfinished cabins, scarcely worthy of being denominated shelters against the cold and storms of winter. Bedclothes were not infrequently very scant in quantity, and often quite poor in quality, also; and their fare, besides being coarse, was sometimes far from being palatable. But we were comforted with the thought that we were able to live a little while on that upon which our hosts subsisted all the time. We were frequently compelled to preach in private houses, in school houses, in barns, and in groves—in any place and every place, indeed, where the people could gather together in order to hear the gospel. To the praise of those early settlers be it said, however, that the generality of those pioneers, always manifested a disposition to show kindness towards the Lord's ambassadors, and to make them as comfortable during their stay with them, as it was in their power to do. And I think I can safely venture to say, in behalf of those poor, jaded pioneer brethren, who labored with me in word and doctrine, in those early days in the

history of General Synod Lutheranism in north-western Ohio, that what we ministers then appreciated most, and best, was the hearty assurances given by our hosts, of our being perfectly welcome to their humble homes, and to all they could do to make our visits pleasant to ourselves. Ministers in those days had but little time, and little opportunity indeed, for reading and study. We were compelled to do most of our thinking while on horseback, or when favored, now and then, with a good and comfortable bed. One thing, however, was in our favor, the people to whom we preached, did not look for flowery sermons, but for plain, practical discourses, and the plainer and more direct the preaching, the better the people were pleased with it, and the larger and happier were the results produced by it.

“The proud he tam’d, the penitent he cheer’d :
Nor to rebuke the rich offender fear’d.
His preaching much, but more his practice wrought,
(A living sermon of the truth he taught.)
For this by rules severe his life he squar’d :
That all might see the doctrine which they heard.”

CHAPTER V.

HAVING now labored in the Bucyrus church for a period of more than twenty years, that is, from December A. D. 1832, to April 1852, and believing that I could be more useful elsewhere in the vineyard of the Lord, I resigned the whole pastorate, and accepted a call to a new charge, which was at that time composed of the Lost Creek, Leesville, Galion, and New Castle congregations. I had previously labored in the Lost Creek congregation, and also in Leesville and Galion, and my work there had been attended with a good degree of success. I am not able to say now, with certainty, whether the Lost Creek congregation was organized by myself, or by Brother Crouse; but I am certain that I organized the church at Leesville, and reorganized the church at Galion. I labored on this field from the spring of A. D. 1852, to the spring of 1861, and then resigned the entire charge. During my last term of service on this work, my la-

bors in the Lost Creek congregation were crowned with encouraging success, and much apparent good was accomplished. Among the leading members of this church were the Kalers, the Werts, the Bishops, Dewalts, Elserts, Magers, and others.

The Leesville congregation was organized, I think, in the early summer of A. D. 1843. Though the society was weak, numerically, yet they purchased a lot of ground, and built a good house of worship thereon. At the laying of the corner stone, the lamented Ezra Keller, D. D., officiated. The congregation, for some reason, never prospered a great deal, although the history of the church, even from its incipency, had been characterized by frequent revivals of religion, and frequent accessions to its membership. Among the first members of this organization, were Peter Wert, Alexander Cannon, Jonas Hassinger, William Dargits, and Henry Heiss, with their families.

The Galion Evangelical Lutheran Church was organized by Rev. Father Stough, in A. D. 1831, and he preached for the congregation for several years, in the German language. Father Stough was succeeded by Rev. Lauer and Rev. Andrew Kuhn, who also preached in the German language. Revs. J. Crouse, J. J. Hoffman, Isaac Culler, and one or two others, perhaps, subsequently preached in Galion, in the English language.

In process of time the German members of the congregation, and those who preferred

preaching in the German language, and who had assisted in the erection of the first house of worship, separated from the English portion of the church, and built a church of their own.

The Galion congregation was, in an early day, a prosperous organization, though they frequently were left, for months together, without a regular pastor.

When I took charge of the church in A. D. 1852, there were but few members left of the English organization. I soon began to gather the young into classes, and to instruct them in the doctrines and duties of religion, and also to conduct special efforts for the awakening and conversion of sinners; and the Lord owned and crowned my labors with an encouraging degree of success.

As the congregation had become strengthened in numbers, and enriched financially, they purchased a new lot, and erected thereon a brick church edifice, at a cost of about \$4,500. After the erection of the new house of worship, the congregation began to agitate the idea of having divine service every Sabbath, in the morning and in the evening, and in process of time the congregation resolved to separate from the rest of the charge, and to maintain an independent, self-supporting position. After this action on the part of the Galion congregation, I continued to serve the remainder of the charge for some time, but my health becoming much impaired, and finding it difficult, even almost impossible to continue my work, I re-

solved to resign the work, and did so, in 1875.

The Scherer congregation, popularly so-called, was organized by Rev. M. Stover, who had preached for a year or two in the Galion church. I took charge of this congregation in A. D. 1854, and the society was at that time regarded as a part of the Galion charge. They now have a new church, and a number of most excellent members. The organization, upbuilding and sustaining of this congregation, is largely due to Messrs. John and Adam Scherer, and their families.

The Lutheran congregation at New Castle was organized before I began to preach for them. They worshipped in a small frame church in the village. About two years after I began my labors there, this congregation was, by common consent, transferred to the Riblet neighborhood, about two and a-half miles west of New Castle, on the Galion road. Here a new church was built, and for a time my labors amongst this people were blessed of God, and the good work seemed to prosper. After I ceased preaching in that place, the church secured the services of other ministers for a short time, but soon ceased to maintain public worship altogether.

In the spring of 1861, I received a call to the Mount Zion charge, in Richland County, Ohio. This charge was composed of four congregations; Mount Zion, Mifflin, Lucas, and St. Johns. There were many very excellent members in this pastorate; men, and women, who

were disposed to labor for God and for souls, and were very much attached to our church. The Mount Zion congregation is, I think, the best country church I was ever called to serve. My labors here, during the first year of my service, were attended with much success; but afterwards, owing to our civil war, then in progress, and the bad state of feeling engendered by it, I seemed to be no longer useful to the charge as such, and I finally concluded to withdraw from the work. I therefore resigned the charge in the spring of 1864, and accepted a call to return to the Galion charge.

I think I might have gotten along with the greater part of the Mount Zion charge, and would have done so, but for the position, and spirit manifested by the Petersburg, or Mifflin congregation. The members of this congregation were all, with one single exception, connected with the Democratic party; and they soon became unfriendly to me, because I rejoiced in the emancipation of American slavery, and also because I adhered to the Republican party; all which I sincerely regarded as my right, and my privilege, as an American citizen.

“What constitutes a State?

Not high-raised battlement or laboured mound,

Thick wall or moated gate;

Not cities proud with spires, and turrets crown'd;

Not bays and broad-armed ports.

Where, laughing at the storm, rich navies ride;

Not starred and spangled courts,

Where low browed baseness wafts perfume to pride.

No! Men, high minded men,
With powers as far above dull brutes endued,
In forest, brake, or den;
As beasts excel cold rocks and brambles rude:
Men, who their duties know,
But know their rights, and knowing, dare maintain,
Prevent the long-aim'd blow,
And crush the tyrant, while they rend the chain:—
These constitute a State."

In due time I returned to Galion, and took charge of the pastorate then known as the Galion charge. This charge was then composed of three congregations; Lost Creek, Leesville, and Scherer's. I continued to labor on in this work until in 1875, when the state of my health became such that I was finally compelled to give up the charge.

The people seemed to cling to me, notwithstanding my growing infirmities, and my frequent inability to meet my engagements to preach; and I found, too, that my own heart turned, as it were, instinctively towards the people of these churches, so that, if Providence had not interfered to forestall the continuance of my work in these congregations, it would have afforded me great pleasure to have remained with them.

"When forced to part from those we love,
Though sure to meet to-morrow;
We yet, a kind of anguish prove
And feel a touch of sorrow.
But oh! What words can paint the fears
When from those friends we sever,
Perhaps to part for months—for years—
Perhaps to part for ever."

In the Spring of 1877, my health being improved very considerable, I received, and accepted a call to the Spring Mill charge, which was composed of the following congregations; Mount Bethel, Spring Mill, Clay's, and Zeiter's. I found those churches in a scattered condition, and the prospect for accomplishing much good in the charge, was, to say the least, not very flattering.

There were, however, many excellent people in the charge, and these, I felt assured would stand by me, and assist me all they could, in building up the work of the Lord among them. I labored hard on this charge, and the blessing of God attended my exertions; and I was both encouraged and comforted in seeing the various interests of the church moving onward and upward under our hands. During my ministry here, a new house of worship was erected in the Mount Bethel congregation, and another one commenced in the Clay congregation.

I shall ever remember, with gratitude to our blessed God and Saviour Jesus Christ, the many acts of christian kindness that I received from many of the members pertaining to these churches, and my prayer is, and shall be while I live, that our heavenly Father may abundantly bless them, and prosper them, individually, temporally, and spiritually.

My health becoming again impaired, so that I could not attend with regularity, and with comfort to myself, to the various duties of my

pastoral relation, I was compelled to resign the work, after having labored on the charge for three years and six months, and was not again able to preach for a long time afterwards. I began to realize very sensibly, the fact that I was growing old, and that the infirmities which usually attend old age, were gradually announcing their presence, and evincing their power. I felt that much as I loved the work of the ministry, and great as was the pleasure which I had always found in working with the gospel, I yet was fully prepared to resign myself wholly, and cheerfully to the will of Providence ; and to trust implicitly in the wise and beneficent ruling of our gracious Father in heaven, touching the question of my ability to still labor in His cause in the world ; and also as to the length of my days on earth.

“Why grieve that time has brought so soon,
The sober age of manhood on ?
As idly should I weep at noon,
To see the blush of morning gone.”

Since I resigned the Spring Mill charge I have had no regular work, and was not, indeed, in a condition, physically, to have managed such a work. But I have labored some, especially in the Galion congregation, as a supply, and preached occasionally for several of my brethren.

I wish here to record my testimony in favor of well conducted prayer meetings, and meetings for Christian testimony, and Sabbath Schools. I introduced all those forms of wor-

ship, and work, and exercise, early in my ministerial history, and have always found them to be of great benefit, alike to individuals and to congregations. I also wish to endorse the utility of protracted meetings, or special efforts for the purpose of securing the revival of believers, and the awakening and conversion of sinners.

But I do believe that more substantial and lasting good can be accomplished by the regular catechisation of the young, by instructing them carefully in the doctrines and duties of our holy christianity, as has been the time-honored custom in the Lutheran church. I am deeply impressed with the thought that the time is rapidly approaching, when the churches, whose origin dates back to the Reformation, will retrace their proceedings in regard to methods employed for the purpose of bringing souls to Christ, and will do all in their power, to make prominent the catechetical method of teaching and preparing men, the young particularly, for membership in the church of Christ.

Moreover, I have always, even from my early youth, been in favor of the temperance cause ; and have delivered many lectures and sermons on the subject ; and I do sincerely rejoice at the growth, and the increasing power of the temperance work, in our own and in foreign countries. My prayer is that the good work may progress more and more, until all intoxicants, and all traffic in the poisons, shall be utterly banished, and absolutely prohibited in

every country, and among all people.

And I cannot forbear saying here, that with mite societies, so-called, and with church socials, I have had but little to do. They have never had my approval. I do not think them to be really beneficial to the vital interests of a christian society, but rather injurious.

Thus I have given a very brief, but true account of my life and labors in the ministry, for more than fifty years; and if this brief history shall prove to be of any comfort and satisfaction to my family, and friends, and of any benefit to the Lutheran Church, under whose auspices, and for whose advancement and usefulness I have been permitted to toil so long, then the one and only end for which I have written these pages, will be subserved.

I am now in my 80th year, and owing to my want of sufficient health and strength, I seldom attempt to preach.

Whether my work on earth is finished or not, God only knows. I enjoy myself well in old age, and amidst my infirmities; and find that I am still growing in grace, and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. I am quite sensible that my days on earth are almost at an end, and that the hour of my departure draws on apace.

I do most sincerely thank God, that He ever called me to labor in word and doctrine in His vineyard; and that he made me to be instrumental in His hands, of doing some good to my fellow men; and to His name be all the

praise. Soon I shall be called away from this mundane sphere, and I have every reason to believe that I shall be saved, not on account of my work, or worthiness, but alone through the mercy of God, in Christ Jesus, my Lord.

And now: "Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father,—to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. AMEN.

CHAPTER VI.

FROM the autobiographer's own statements about the middle of the previous chapter, it will be remembered that his last regular work in the active ministry, was done in the Spring Mills charge. This charge he served from the spring of 1877 until some time in the fall of 1880, when on account of failing health he resigned, and was succeeded by the Rev. R. P. Reddick, in the following spring.

The last four years of his life were spent in the peaceful quiet of complete retirement. By economical habits and good judgment in his temporal affairs, he was enabled to lay by a considerable sum of money, which he invested in real estate in the city of Galion. To the care of this property he gave some attention, though it never engrossed his mind. His situation, therefore, during his retirement and in the infirmities of old age, was thereby made quite comfortable ; and those who visited him

and were familiar with his home life know how sweetly and happily his hours at home were spent, and how well he enjoyed them.

"This fond attachment to the well-known place,
Whence first we started into life's long race,
Maintains its hold with such unfailing sway,
We feel it e'en in age, and at our latest day."

It would be an injustice to this account of his life to pass by an event that transpired during his connection with the Synod of which he was an honored, though retired member. The following action of Wittenberg Synod, taken from the minutes of its convention, held in Plymouth, Ohio, August, 1880, will explain the nature of this event:

"Whereas, The next meeting of our Synod will convene about the time of the semi-centennial of Father Ruth's ministry: Therefore, resolved, that we set apart Friday evening of the next convention of Synod, to hearing an address by Rev. F. J. Ruth, the subject to be: "Personal Reminiscences of His Fifty Years' Life and Work in the Lutheran Ministry."

By the goodness and forbearance of Divine Providence, Brother Ruth's life was prolonged through the intervening year, and he was blessed with health and strength sufficient to enable him to attend the meeting of Synod at Carey, in September, 1881, and to deliver, at the time appointed, the above mentioned semi-centennial address to a large and appreciative audience.

At the conclusion of this address Rev. Dr. J. Crouse stepped into the pulpit, and in a few well chosen sentences presented to him a handsome purse containing one hundred dollars—a token of esteem from a few of his many friends among the ministry, and the several churches where he had spent the years of his ministry. His gratitude for this kindness was afterwards expressed through the columns of the church papers in the following manner:

A CARD.

At the meeting of Wittenberg Synod, convened at Carey, Wyandot county, Ohio, on the 28th of September, A. D. 1881, after delivering a semi-centennial address before Synod, I was presented, through Rev. J. Crouse, D. D., with a valuable gift, as an humble tribute of regard for me personally, and for my labors during fifty years in the Lutheran ministry in northern Ohio. As I was not informed who the donors were, I take this method of presenting my sincere and hearty thanks to the many valued friends who so kindly contributed to this object.

May God bless my friends richly, both in time and in eternity, and I do hereby assure them that this tribute of regard will ever be remembered with gratitude.

Your's Truly, F. J. RUTH.

He was by nature contemplative, and as Wordsworth's lines so well express it—

“Of a steady mind,
Not speaking much ; pleased rather with the joy
Of his own thoughts : by some especial care
His temper had been framed as if to make
A being—who by adding love to peace
Might live on earth a life of happiness.”

A good part of his time was occupied in reading, writing, and meditation. Some scraps from his pen found here and there among his papers show that death and heaven were among the most favored subjects of his meditations.

A SCRAP.

“Some knowledge of heaven is necessary. Without this we could have no desire after it, no sympathy with it, no preparation for it. But our acquaintance with it here is very imperfect. After all the developments of inspired truth, it doth not yet appear what we shall be—it is a glory that is to be revealed. ‘Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.’

Heaven is promised to all true believers ; but in order to obtain that glorious, promised inheritance, we must pass over the Jordan of death. The same was also true in relation to the Israelites. They were now commanded to go and take possession of the promised land, a land flowing with milk and honey : but in

order to do this they must first pass over Jordan."

He greatly enjoyed the consolations of the gospel he had so faithfully preached. His rejoicing was this: "the testimony of his conscience that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God he had had his conversation in the world." Thus he knew the peace that passeth understanding. Looking around him he was assured that he had the respect of the world, the confidence of the church, and the smiles of heaven—and so the hope that maketh not ashamed, that is an anchor to the soul, was his. Conscious of steady growth in grace, and soon to close a long and toilsome, though eminently useful life, with the evidences of his successful career in a score of well established churches all around him, he could say with Paul, "I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry."

His character and work were both of the Pauline stamp, sturdy, strong in faith, tried and true. His old age was honored and beautiful, because his life had been noble and beneficent. He was ripe for heaven and earth could not retain him long.

The beginning of his last illness was on July 10, 1884. This seemed to be a complete prostration. He grew better in a few days, however, and was able to be about again. On the evening of July 25th he grew worse, and appeared to be sinking rapidly. The next morn-

ing he became unconscious, and immediately the news of his declining condition was sent to his relatives and friends. He became weaker and weaker as the day advanced, and by night-fall it was evident that death was near. By this time the whole city was apprised of his approaching dissolution. He lingered, sinking gradually, until 2:45 a. m., on Sabbath, when he quietly passed away.

“How calm his exit !

Night-dews fall not more gently o the ground,
Nor weary, worn-out winds expire so soft.”

The following is a statement concerning his physical condition during his last years, given by his attending physician, at the request of the committee :

GALION, Ohio, Aug. 2nd, 1884.

Respected Friends : It is with no small degree of emotion and embarrassment that I attempt to chronicle these few lines, on the obituary of “Father Ruth,” as we had learned to call him, and a worthy name it is in every sense of the word. Being a pioneer in this locality, he had pursued his untiring and useful labors even unto the ripe old age of seventy-nine years. I learned of him first in the year 1868, at his late residence in Galion. I was called to advise with him as to his physical condition. I found a man of a bilious-nervous temperament, symmetrical in form, large lung capacity ; also a large and well-developed brain, the evidence of great power of endur-

ance to repel disease and to overcome obstacles. I have prescribed medicine for him at intervals, for sixteen years. Some attacks were very severe. The bane of his health throughout life, I will give in his own language: "a torpid and inactive liver," that being the diagnostic symptom in the case. Other vital organs from time to time became diseased. In March, 1884, he was attacked with malarial fever, accompanied with other difficulties, and was sick a number of weeks. At times his life was despaired of; but by God's blessing upon the means used, he was enabled to regain sufficient strength, and comparative health, so as to visit his old and highly-esteemed friends and neighbors in the city and country.

On July 10th he was taken ill with a severe attack of nervous prostration. The most diagnostic symptom was insufficiency of the heart's action. He gradually grew worse without suffering any pain. His feelings I give in his own words: "I have no pain at all, I feel good." During his entire illness his mental faculties were remarkably clear, and vigorously active on any and all subjects. In his last moments I said, "Mr. Ruth, you are now in a dying condition." He answered in a firm voice, "Well," and nodded his head in the affirmative. That was the last word he spoke. At 2:45 a. m., Sunday, July 27, he expired.

Respectfully Yours, C. L. COYLE, M. D.

It was an hour of holy triumph ; and yet so pure and strong was his influence for good, that all hearts were pained at their loss, and in common grief seemed to say, "Help Lord : for the godly man ceaseth ; for the faithful fail from among the children of men."

Notice of his departure was given at the Sabbath morning service, and by the time of the evening service, arrangements for burial were completed and announced for Tuesday, July 29, at 10 a. m.

It was a bright and beautiful day, after the morning clouds had passed by. At an early hour a throng of good people crowded the residence within and without, with tearful eyes, eager to look again upon his sweet and noble face. It was beautiful in death, for it had been set for God and truth in life.

At the appointed hour the remains were borne to the English Lutheran Church,—the church built under his own superintendence, where he had ministered to the people in earlier years. By his request, Revs. Dr. J. Crouse and D. Summers conducted the services. Rev. Summers preached the funeral discourse from II Chronicles, xxiv:16, and Dr. Crouse followed in remarks touchingly tender, his voice mellowed and trembling with deepest emotion. He was followed with remarks by Revs. Dr. H. L. Wiles, D. W. Smith, and C. S. Ernsberger.

There were present also Revs. H. B. Belmer, J. M. Dustman and S. P. Fryberger, and sev-

eral resident ministers of other denominations.

He chose his own burial place, and after the last sad look was given, his body was laid to rest in Union Green Cemetery, Galion, Ohio.

“Farewell, my home ! my home no longer now ;
Witness of many a calm and happy day ;
And thou, fair eminence, upon whose brow,
Dwells the last sunshine of the evening ray.”

* *
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FUNERAL SERMON.

BY REV. D. SUMMERS.

“And they buried him in the City of David, among the Kings, because he had done good in Israel, both toward God and toward His house.” 2 Chron. 24:16.

Good examples are recorded in the Holy Scriptures for our imitation. “Ye have us,” says the Apostle Paul, “for an ensample.” “That thou mayest walk,” says Solomon, “in the way of good men, and keep the paths of the righteous.” Precepts are good, but good examples are better. Place many men who have had “line upon line and precept upon precept,”

where pure examples have no existence, and where unmasked impiety has no aspect of singularity, and how soon they would forsake the right way and plunge headlong into the ways of sin and destruction. Not only while living do good men exert a salutary influence upon all around them, by their daily walk, but after they have gone from labor to reward, others still plant their feet in the prints of their steps, and become followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises." Such a man was doubtless the one referred to in the text. His name was Jehoiada. He lived about eight hundred years before the Christian era. He was not a king but a high priest in the Jewish Church.

That he faithfully discharged the duties of his office, and saw his labors crowned with success, is evident from the record we have of his life. By his interposition, Joash, son of Joram, king of Judah, was rescued from the murderous violence of Athaliah, and after being duly instructed, was set on the throne of David. Early in his ministry this high priest formed a design of repairing the temple, which during the reigns of Joram and Athaliah had been pillaged to enrich that of Baal, and the whole structure permitted to fall into decay. For this purpose he had collected considerable sums of money in the cities of Judah, but the Levites did not perform their part of the work, as assigned them, and hence it was not till after the young king united his authority with

that of the high priest that the undertaking was accomplished. After a long and useful life in church and state, the high priest died, at the age of one hundred and thirty years. In recognition of his eminent services to the cause of God and humanity, he was buried "in the City of David, among the kings." This is a proof of the high estimation in which he was held by the people. It showed the respect they entertained for the office, old age, works, and character of the deceased.

We have come together to-day at this place, to manifest by words and deeds our esteem for the old age, the office, the services and character of him whose lifeless remains are now before us.

Our friend and dearly beloved brother in the Lord, Rev. F. J. Ruth, after a long and useful life, has fallen from the ranks of our Israel. A faithful ambassador of Jesus Christ has been gathered in peace to the home of the saints above, where he now rests from his labors, conflicts and sufferings.

Like Jehoiada, he "waxed old, and was full of days when he died;" seventy-nine years six months and eighteen days "old was he when he died," and "because he had done good in Israel, both toward God and toward His house," we have come to bury him with the highest honors of a christian brotherhood. Not as the world honors its heroes in the hour of death, with pomp and show, but with united, heart-felt tributes to his memory, and his worth, do

we engage in these funeral solemnities.

Of his old age we need only say that we are truly thankful to God for having spared his life to such a good old age. "The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness." How beautiful, how lovely, how instructive such a sight. That heart is to be pitied which remains unimpressed by such a scene as this. The command is as reasonable as it is just, "Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head and honor the face of the old man." and so far as I know, none with whom our friend came in contact failed to obey the divine injunction. I know whereof I speak when I say that no man in the Synod to which he belonged, and no man throughout this section of the church was more highly respected and esteemed, than the deceased. Everybody loved him for his work's sake, and because he was an "Israelite indeed, in whom was no guile." He was respected and honored on account of his office. He was a minister of the Gospel of Christ. For over half a century he held this office, a higher and more sacred one than which is not to be found on earth. And humble as was the opinion which he had of himself, unworthy as he counted himself of this honor, yet like the great apostle of the Gentiles, he magnified his office, regarded it as a holy, divine calling, the highest human vocation, and one of unspeakable dignity, as well as tremendous responsibilities. Never by word nor deed did he lower the office of the

christian ministry in the estimation of even the most worldly minded men. No one ever heard saint or sinner say that he disgraced his office. Not for the mere sake of the honor inseparably connected with a faithful ministry, and surely not for the sake of "filthy lucre" did he desire this office, but that he might "do good in Israel, both toward God and toward His house." That is, the purpose of his life was to do good in the world for God's glory, and the welfare of His church. The great end of his life was not self-glorification. There is but one being in the universe that can make His own glory the ultimate object of His existence, and that being is God, because He is self-existent and independent, essentially glorious and happy. Consequent obligation is the condition on which man receives his existence. "The chief end of man is to glorify God." It is both man's shame and misery that he forgets the great end of his being. "No man liveth to himself and no man dieth to himself: for whether we live, we live to the Lord; and whether we die, we die to the Lord; whether we live, therefore, or die, we are the Lord's." If a finite creature were to seek his own glory, he would make an attempt to vault into the very throne and invade the very prerogative of heaven; he would aim at that which does not belong to the creature, attempt to rob God. Alas! what multitudes of rational, intelligent beings, created for God's glory, are doing nothing, attempting nothing purely out of love.

and obedience to the great Author of their existence. "God is not in all their thoughts." They contrive and lay their plans, purpose to do so and so, and proceed to actions without ever taking God or His will into consideration.

This was not the case with him whose funeral we now attend. For God he lived. How he might do the most for His glory was the uppermost thought in his mind, and the one great desire of his heart.

Second to this object was the good of the church. That he might do the greatest possible good, be the most useful in the church, he prepared himself by study and the cultivation of the christian graces for the gospel ministry, believing that the great Head of the church had called him to this work. The heart of a christian is the seat of a pure benevolence, which extends to all the children of men; and to do good unto all men as he has opportunity, "especially unto them who are of the household of faith," is his business and delight. The prospect of winning souls to Christ gives him joy, because he is an instrument of their happiness, and of promoting the glory of his Redeemer! and the prospect of doing anything to meliorate the sufferings of mankind even on the smallest scale, affords him pleasure. The minister of the gospel loves all men, and according to his ability, and beyond his ability, is willing to labor for the good of all; but the church of Christ has the first and highest claims upon his services.

“For her my tears shall fall ;
For her my prayers ascend ;
To her my cares and toils be giv’n,
Till toils and cares shall end.”

The design of the gospel ministry, is a design precisely of the same nature with that for which man was first created,—“to glorify God and to enjoy him forever.” If God be glorified, man is benefited by it. He is by these means, as a sinful and unhappy being, brought constantly up to the bread of life, to the water of life, and to the word of life ; and thus anew refreshed and cheered, he goes on from strength to strength, till he appears before God in Zion above. “Let him know that he who converteth the sinner from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death and shall hide a multitude of sins.” What a glorious work is this ; a work, the beneficial results of which not only follow men through this life, but reach forward into the endless ages of eternity. Oh ! “How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace ; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation ; that saith unto Zion, ‘thy God reigneth.’”

This was the lifework of our departed brother. For the salvation of souls, the peace and prosperity of the church, he labored in season and out of season. To this work he was wholly consecrated. To it his time, talents and acquirements were cheerfully and unceasingly given. He was no sectarian ; he loved

all who bore the image of Christ and rejoiced in the prosperity of all Christian denominations; but to the church of his choice he devoted his best energies. And to him more than to any other one man is the Lutheran Church of northern Ohio indebted for her present prosperous condition. He was the pioneer and founder, directly or indirectly, of nearly all the present congregations in this and adjoining counties, and from these have gone forth his converts to new settlements, where they started new churches. The deceased came to Ohio more than fifty years ago, when the country was new and the people all poor in this world's goods. It was not a question of salary, not a worldly compensation that induced him to enter this field of labor. Nothing but the spiritual welfare of souls and the glory of his Divine Master influenced him to enter upon the work of the ministry in this new country. Without promise of any pecuniary support whatever, with unwearied perseverance, with an unselfish devotion, "in season and out of season," his untiring efforts were steadily and uniformly directed to the good of souls. Whatever has a tendency to promote the happiness of man, either in things which relate to this world, or that which is to come, may be called doing good. To instruct the ignorant, to warn the guilty, to comfort the mourner, to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to visit the sick, the fatherless and the widow, to minister to the wants of the dying,

and to rescue the perishing, are all works of goodness. And all these are included in the work of a christian minister ; and in all these ways did our departed brother do good. To the time-honored custom and heaven-approved means for the religious instruction of young people, viz : catechisation, he gave time and attention. From the pulpit he explained and enforced the commands, opened and applied the promises, and without regard to the fear or favor of man, declared the awful threatenings of God's word. By this means the careless were alarmed, the fearful encouraged, and the pious edified. He taught the people to pray to God for a supply of all their wants, to praise him for all their enjoyments, and in all things to love, honor and obey Him. He taught them not only to profess religion, but to practice the same, that they might be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, but faithful and exemplary christians, "always abounding in the work of the Lord." He taught them how to govern themselves and their families, and how to perform every social and civil duty. At the same time he carefully pointed out their weaknesses, frailties, corruptions, sins and dangers, and directed them to look up, by a living faith, to the Lord Jesus Christ for grace to help in every time of need.

He did not confine his instructions to the pulpit, but went, especially in the earlier part of his ministry, when churches were few and

far between, from house to house, giving to saint and sinner a portion of meat in due season. This whole western country was before him, and as he had opportunity he "preached the gospel to every creature."

What a wide field of usefulness opened to him here half a century ago, and what a glorious harvest do we now behold, as the result of his labors. Because he did his duty, did it faithfully; did good in Israel, he lived respected by all, died lamented, and his memory is precious. What has been beautifully said of the influence of one generation, may be affirmed of the influence of one such man: "As every generation owes some part of its character to that which preceded it, so it imparts some portion of its own to that which follows it, and thus propagates the blessed and augmented influences of itself and all its predecessors."

And now this long and useful life has come to a close. Those lips that were wont so eloquently to speak of Christ, hope and heaven, are now silent in death. Soon we shall look for the last time upon the friendly and familiar countenance of our beloved brother in Christ. The workman has fallen, but his work will go on, blessed and a blessing, to the end of time. Brethren in the ministry, you have no need that I should talk to you about the character of the deceased. You have seen in him an ardor of zeal, a gentleness of humility, a courage and constancy of faith, a joy of hope, a triumph of the love of Jesus Christ, a kindness

and tenderness of charity, a magnanimity without pride, a prudence without cunning, a simplicity without folly, a contentment without disdain, a soul which perfectly hated vice in all its forms, and equally loved the souls of men; a man with many virtues and few faults. His whole life is a sermon, exemplifying and authorizing in his own character all that he declared with his tongue. He did not preach one thing and practice another. The Gospel he preached, he lived. Let that truth, innocence, gentleness, sweetness, beneficence, that purity of manners, that gravity and virtue which he recommended, both by his doctrine and practice, and which the world saw and admired in him, revive and shine amongst us, and then shall we also at the end of our days depart in peace with the consciousness of having done good, and the assurance of a blissful immortality beyond the grave, with all who loved and served our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. And then not unto us, but “unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father, to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever, Amen.”

REMARKS BY REV. J. CROUSE, D. D.

DEAR FRIENDS AND BRETHREN: The present occasion is fitted to awaken sentiments of

profound sorrow in the hearts of all here assembled.

A good man, one whose steps were ordered by the Lord, is no more. God hath taken him.

To me, personally, the present hour is pregnant with mingled grief and sadness, the measure of which I cannot express. Brother Summers and myself were requested to conduct these funeral solemnities, and, as we understood the notice sent us, it was desired that I should deliver the sermon. There are some reasons why that part of these solemn services may have been assigned to me, and why that request should have been complied with. But I felt that I could not perform that office, in this case. Hence I took the liberty of shifting that duty, that honor, upon Brother Summers; and he has honored the subject and the occasion worthily.

Our departed Brother, Francis Jacob Ruth, was a brother to me in a higher and holier sense than the mere technical one. The relation which subsisted between us was like that which existed between David and Jonathan, the relation of sincere and steady friendship. Our acquaintance dates back over a period of more than two score and three years; nor was it a superficial acquaintance merely, but a familiar knowledge, mutual attachment, and reciprocation of kindnesses.

A sense of duty and gratitude prompts me to acknowledge, in this public manner, my in-

debtedness to the agency of our departed brother, under God, in my recovery from a partially lapsed condition in religion, soon after we had become acquainted, and for the encouragement that he gave me in that critical period of my religious history, urging me to press onward and upward in the conflict for the crown of life; and also my indebtedness to him, under God, for the influence which he exerted upon me, tending to lead me into the ministry. In the providence of God, he became my preceptor, directed and aided me in various ways, in my studies preparatory to my entering upon the active work of the sacred office, an employment for which I had longed, even from my early childhood. I thank God most devoutly, that I ever met brother Ruth, and that so large a portion of my life has been so closely allied with his own pure life. He was dear unto me; I loved him; I honor his memory. Many were the times when we opened our hearts, each to the other, and when we took sweet counsel together.

Solace, mutual and cheering, grew out of our intimate and frequent communings, as soul conversed with soul.

For a number of years, during the formative period of our General Synod Churches, in northwestern Ohio, we labored together in special efforts for the salvation of souls, and in most of those instances, our work was crowned with glorious success. We who have known Brother Ruth longest, and best, can appreciate

a remark he made to me, during my interview with him a few weeks ago. "I rejoice very much," said he, "at what God has wrought for the Church through my feeble labors." But what will be the joy of our departed brother, and of all faithful ministers of the gospel, when they shall come up before the King of glory, with gladness, bringing their sheaves with them! Heaven help us to be faithful, and true, even unto the end of our days.

REMARKS OF REV. H. L. WILES, D. D.

It affords me no small pleasure to be present at the funeral of our venerable father, drop a silent tear with the bereaved and sorrow-stricken family, and bear testimony to the inestimable worth of his character and labors. What was said of Nathaniel can be truly said of him. "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile." Constantly before the public for more than fifty years, yet no one ever had occasion to say aught against the integrity of his character, or the uprightness of his life. He kept himself "unspotted from the world." He lived what he professed. His life was above suspicion. Those who came in contact with him invariably saw that he had been with Christ and had learned from Him the lesson of holy living. He was also a man of conviction. He had opinions and he advocated them.

He was never found on both sides of the same question. He studied to know the truth and he preached it; untrammelled by fear or favor. As a faithful workman he hewed to the line, no matter on which side the chips might fall. And yet, strange to say, notwithstanding the bold and fearless manner in which he advocated the truth, but few ever took exceptions to his preaching. This, I think, was due to the fact that those who heard him were impressed with the honesty of his purpose, his unswerving adherence to the right as God showed him the right, and his faith in the truth which he preached, or the justice of the cause which he advocated.

Truly, a great man has fallen in Israel, and has left behind him an example which every young minister would do well to imitate.

With all his decision of character and fearlessness in advocating the right, he had within him a very kind heart. I shall ever remember the kind, helpful words of advice and encouragement which he gave me in my early efforts to preach the gospel. I feel the inspiration of them yet, as warm blood coursing through my veins. They were sweeter than honey from the honeycomb, and more precious than rubies. God be praised for the life and labors of this noble christian man. He rests from his labors but his work goes on.

REMARKS OF REV. D. W. SMITH.

I am here as a sincere mourner. One who was highly esteemed, and as a father in the ministry, one who was dear to us, has fallen asleep. It is difficult after the long period of his activity and eminent usefulness, to realize that he is dead. He, however, belongs to that select and highly honored class, "who being dead yet speaketh." Whatever I may say will not add any lustre to his good name here, or in the churches where he was so well and favorably known.

But it is a blessed privilege to unite with my brethren in expressions by which we recognize his piety, faithful service, and great worth to our church, and of our profound sorrow at the loss we sustain in his departure.

We cannot add a single star to his crown of rejoicing, but we can honor ourselves in giving proper recognition to his surpassing virtues. Several thoughts assert their right to have attention in my mind. One is the heritage which he has left to us. In his pure, upright and consecrated life there is an invaluable blessing. We should also remember Father Ruth as a pioneer in our church work in this State. Like all other pioneers, whether dwelling on the great prairie, or in the cabin in the gloom of the forest, or as the faithful inquirer

after truth, he gets far in advance of his former associates ; he was brave, industrious, inured to hardships, full of faith, and I may say, often very lonely. He caught the spirit which was prophesied of his Master,—“He shall not fail nor be discouraged.” In this spirit he toiled through the past half century. In three counties adjoining each other, where we had no congregations when he came, we now have a large number of flourishing charges. At the day of his death these congregations have a large and growing membership, substantial church buildings, many of them comfortable parsonages, and salaries adequate to the proper support of the pastor. This is the heritage which he has left to us.

But this suggests a sense of responsibility. Are we worthy and capable of receiving such a heritage ? We know well enough how past victories have been won, and how this once wild territory was subdued. Have we a devotion kindred to the spirit that had a conspicuous part in bringing about this great change ?

Have we a supreme love for God and an undying love for souls ? Will our zeal burn brighter in the presence of constantly recurring difficulties ? Have we determined to be faithful even unto the end ? We come here with a keen sense of gratitude for the blessings which have been bequeathed to us through his faithful ministry ; but let us also go away with a proper sense of the responsibility which rests upon us.

As we assume the pressing duties of life we should be encouraged by the peaceful death of this aged saint. God, in his kind providence, prolonged his life until he beheld all of our institutions and churches come into encouraging prosperity and large usefulness. Much of his faith, even here, was swallowed up in fruition. In age he beheld God's protecting care until "the stones of the field were in league with him."

In results of labor, he beheld so much of the power which goes with the gospel, that he could say, "Now Lord, lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation."

Some months ago when I visited him with a view of obtaining some facts connected with the history of the congregation which I was then serving, and of which he was the only living person who had correct knowledge, we talked over the successive experiences in his eventful life. Our conversation naturally drifted to his present spiritual condition. He spoke cheerfully of the sustaining grace of God, and said, "I have good times here." In this expression he referred to his experience in personal communion with God. How much is embraced in that saying, "I have good times here." In his own dear home he had a blessed foretaste of the happiness which he would enjoy in the heavenly home. Hopeful, peaceful, restful in spirit, he was patiently waiting for the invitation to come up higher.

A long and useful life, a beautiful old age, closed in holy triumph. What a comfort to the members of this sorrowing family! What an inspiration to those of us who preach the word of God! Now we sing these hymns in triumph in the presence of death. This enemy cannot rob us of our hopes. We renew our strength with the testimony of one who has so gloriously triumphed. The promises shine with unusual brightness, and we look forward to that day when this "last enemy," death, shall be destroyed. May God sanctify to our good, the remembrance of the life and death of Father Ruth.

REMARKS OF REV. C. S. ERNSBERGER.

If I were to consult with my feelings to-day, I would take my seat with this bereft widow and these sorrowing children. For, to me, Brother Ruth was, indeed, like a father. Taught by him as a catechumen in my boyhood, I learned then to esteem him as a faithful religious instructor, and was deeply impressed with the high dignity and the ardent piety of his life.

He was a sternly sober man, an earnest-souled brother, humble, approachable, and kind. He was the friend of every minister of

the gospel, and was especially concerned in the success and progress of his younger brethren. It was my great privilege and pleasure to call on him frequently since I located as pastor of this church. I usually found him engaged in reading, and sometimes profoundly interested in some new or special subject. Not infrequently on entering his study, I found him busily engaged in the preparation of sermons, I remarked to him one day as I found him so engaged, that I supposed he expected to preach somewhere the next Sabbath. "No," said he, not that I know of. This has been my chief work for more than fifty years, and I find great pleasure in it whether I ever preach the sermons or not." This, no doubt, has been one of the secrets of his impressiveness in the preaching of the gospel. He not only believed the truth, but rejoiced in it, also. I always found him deeply interested in my work. I could speak to him freely about it, and did so often. He was a wise counselor and a faithful friend. On all questions of practical theology, he was especially able and interesting. We shall miss him everywhere, and especially here in his pew, where he was always to be found on the Sabbath, when able. The sweet but powerful influence of his noble and Christlike life, will survive his bodily presence going down through the years as a constant power for good.

He frequently occupied this pulpit during my absence, and occasionally assisted at the

regular services. The last discourse he preached in this house was a historical sermon by request of the congregation, delivered September 23, 1883. This has been preserved among the archives of the congregation. The last occasion on which he participated in divine service in this house, was at a sacramental service, June 29, about one month ago. This was his last communion before entering the communion of heaven. We lay his ashes to rest with the prayer that the purity and faithfulness of his life may be to us all a constant inspiration.

CHAPTER VII.

SERMON.

· THE FALL OF MAN. ·

GEN. 3:13.

“And the Lord God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.”

The subject of our present meditations is a brief narration of one of the most awefully portentous acts which was ever perpetrated under the broad canopy of heaven. To this source, we may trace all the crimes, and sins, in their endless, and diversified circumstances, which have inundated the world. It is here that we find the germination of a principle which has taken deep root, and has poisoned the entire race of man.

Had the fact recorded in the text, been merely of a speculative character, it might, even then, have excited curiosity, and elicited inquiry; but as we are involved in the ruin which has resulted from that fatal act, it cannot be an unprofitable exercise, to spend a little time in reciting what we know of this sad transaction. In doing this, two things claim our attention, viz: 1, The act of the serpent, and 2, The act of the woman.

Man was originally formed after the image of God. His understanding was quick, vigorous in its perceptions; his will was subject to the divine law, and to the dictates of reason; his passions serene, and uncontaminated with evil, his affections dignified and pure, his love supremely fixed upon his Creator, and his joy unmingled with those sorrows which have so long been the bitter portion of his degenerate race. In short, he was in rank but a little inferior to the angels, who burn and adore in the temple above. He was crowned with glory and honor, and was ordained to be lord over all the creatures.

To facilitate the happiness of the first pair, God provided for their residence a most delightful spot, called Eden, and which was watered by an extensive river, divided into four streams. The place was furnished with all kinds of fruits and vegetables, which were both pleasing to the eye and delightful to the taste. Among the many trees which grew in that lovely garden, there were two remarkable

ones, the one called "the tree of life," the other, "the tree of knowledge."

Into this sacred enclosure the Lord conducted our first parents, and directed them to take care of it, to superintend the great variety of plants therein contained. He granted them permission to eat of the fruit of every tree in the garden, except of that of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. He strictly charged them not even to touch this, under the penalty of incurring His displeasure, and thereby entailing upon themselves and their posterity, mortality, disease, and death.

With this small restraint the Lord left our first parents to enjoy the pleasures of their Eden home. All external objects being in the highest degree beautiful and pleasing, they were adapted to contribute alike to their comfort and their pleasure. The amazing magnificence of the creation, the heavens bespangled with innumerable brilliant stars, the earth dappled with vegetables of different kinds, and various hues, and adorned with flowers, diffusing odoriferous sweets, furnished their minds with interesting subjects for the most delightful meditation. Thus their happiness was complete, and they knew not even the shadow of a sense of want in order to perfect their primeval bliss.

But alas ! their heaven-bestowed happiness was shortlived ! Scarcely had they tasted the dainties of Eden, before they were driven from that lovely spot, where pure spirits alone could

dwell. Satan, who prior to that period was hurled from heaven, in consequence of his rebellion, envied our first parents their happiness, and meditated their ruin. He entered the home of the happy pair, and plied his malicious scheme for their destruction, and, sad to say, he succeeded in accomplishing his hellish purpose.

Our original progenitors partook of the prohibited fruit, and fell from their God-given innocence and bliss. They lost those perfections and that happiness which their Maker bestowed on them at their creation.

The cause of their ruin is ascribed in our text, to the serpent,—the devil. But who, or what was the serpent? In the first verse of our chapter, the serpent is represented as “a beast of the field;” but to suppose that any beast of the field, would of his own accord, and at his own instigation, beguile the woman, and to seduce her to sin, would be an absurdity too palpable to be admitted, because it would imply that the serpent was superior to the woman, the mere beast of the field more exalted in rank, and more richly endowed, intellectually, than man, who stood in the scale of creation, next to the angels of heaven. Such an idea would imply also, that the mere serpent effected the woman’s ruin by carrying into execution a mischievous design, on the ground of his superiority to man.

But as God made everything “good,” “very good,” as He saw that all things which He created were agreeable to His mind, were just

as he would have them, each individual part answering the end for which it was designed, and the whole, declaring His wisdom, and power, and goodness, we must refer to some other cause for the woman's perpetration of the sad offence against God.

The most common opinion on this subject, is, that the devil, in the likeness of a serpent, appeared to, and conversed with Eve.

Whether this appearance, was an appearance only, or whether it was a real, living serpent, actuated and possessed by the devil, is not certain; by God's permission it might be either. In reference to this fact, satan is called the "old serpent." And St. Paul, in his second Epistle to the Corinthians, says, "I fear as the serpent beguiled Eve, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ."

But Paul could not fear that that "beast of the field," called "the serpent," would corrupt the Christians at Corinth. That the devil can so far possess human, or mere animal bodies, as to act upon them, and speak through them, is most satisfactorily proven by the circumstance of the legion of devils who possessed the poor demoniac; and who said to our divine Lord, "What have we to do with Thee, Jesus, Thou Son of God; art Thou come to torment us before the time?"

Those unclean spirits, when they came out of the man, at the command of Christ, entered, by our Lord's permission, into a herd of swine, and the herd ran violently down a steep place

into the sea, and were drowned in the sea.

Thus we see that the immediate and real agent in the seduction of man to sin, was the devil, in the visible form of a serpent. And satan chose a serpent, because it is a specious creature, and then went erect. Perhaps it was a flying serpent, which seemed to come as a messenger from the upper world, one of the seraphim. Many a dangerous temptation comes in gay, fine colors, and seems from above ; for satan can seem an angel of light. And then, too, the serpent is a subtle creature. Many instances are given of the serpent's subtlety, both to do mischief and to secure itself in it when done. We are bid to be wise as serpents.

Satan, then, was the real tempter of Eve, was that subtle and powerful evil spirit, whose appellations are the devil and satan, the former term signifying a traducer, and false accuser ; and the latter an adversary. And this enemy possesses every qualification for managing the deep laid plots which he devises for man's ruin. He is endowed with extensive knowledge. Angels—and an angel he was, possess amazing powers of intellect. And though fallen angels have lost all the moral excellencies with which they were endowed by their Creator, yet they most probably retained much of their original vigor of understanding.

Satan knew in what part of the universe to find the parents of our race ; he knew their circumstances, the nature of the law under

which they were placed, the misery that would ensue on their violation of that law, and, doubtless, the mischievous results of their fall, to, and upon their posterity, to the end of time.

Satan also possessed the most consummate wickedness. He is called the "wicked one," and an "evil spirit." The devil is a being who is replete with wickedness; and this was the most wicked scheme that was ever devised.

Knowing the nature and the extent of the curse which would come upon the visible creation, as a consequence of man's apostacy, what great wickedness was it in satan, to attempt to secure such a dreadful catastrophe!

What consummate wickedness, to involve innocent and holy beings in guilt and misery; beings who deserved no such treatment, but rather deserved to be admired, and loved and protected, as the crowning specimens of God's handiwork in the visible creation.

Alas! how many human beings there are in the world who glory in their attempts to imitate the arch-fiend, in causing, sustaining and perpetuating human wretchedness and sorrow! human beings who are wise to do mischief, who employ their God-given powers of mind, in imposing on the credulous, and ruining the innocent. Well and truly did our blessed Saviour say of all who are wilfully and deliberately wicked, "Ye are of your father, the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do."

But how did the serpent beguile the woman? We answer, 1st. By attacking her when alone.

We infer this, not on the ground of a commonly received opinion, but from the narrative itself. Here we see the whole of that fatal interview between the serpent and the mother of our race.

Adam had no share in that interview. The devil well knew that Adam was the superior of the twain, and knew it from the circumstance of his being first formed, and of Eve being made a helpmeet for him.

Had Adam been present at that interview, he and his companion would most probably have taken sweet counsel together, on a subject of so much consequence, before acting upon the suggestion of the evil one. But Eve being alone, satan succeeded in accomplishing his wicked design, but not without much exertion and cunning on his part. O, how wise it is in affairs of great moment to pause, and hesitate, to deliberate carefully, and to advise with our superiors in age and experience, before acting in the matter. Had Eve pursued this course when the devil questioned whether it were a sin or no, to eat of the forbidden fruit, yea, when he denied that there was any danger in the act, and suggested that there was much advantage to be gained thereby, satan perhaps would not have succeeded so soon, and so well, if at all.

The ruin of man was not the result of an absolute decree of God. He no doubt foresaw, foreknew, that man would fall, but he did not decree that dire event.

Man was made a rational creature, a moral agent, and was endowed with a will in liberty; for will, as will, must be free, or there is no such faculty. Hence man was a subject of moral law, and responsible for his conduct. He was at perfect liberty to either obey the divine law, and live, or to disobey that law and die.

The freedom of the human will is an inviolable right, which neither God nor satan will attempt to wrest from him.

2nd. The serpent beguiled Eve by directing her attention to the prohibited object.

There was much in the garden of Eden to admire, and much to enjoy ; one tree only was prohibited, and to this tree the serpent directed the attention of the woman, and induced her to look upon it, to speak of it, and about it, and, at length, to desire it. We have many prohibited objects. These we should shun, or flee from, and never trust our eyes to gaze upon, because they are likely to excite desires of an unholy nature in our hearts. "Abstain from every appearance of evil," is an important precept, which we do well to observe. Oh, if our unfortunate mother Eve had done this, how effectually would she have broken the snare of the devil, and escaped the evil intended by him. But she continued to gaze upon the interdicted object, perhaps, until her appetite became aroused, and she eagerly longed to taste the tempting fruit, and thus she fell a victim to the stratagem of the evil one.

3d. The serpent beguiled the woman, by suggesting to her the prospect of an important advantage to be gained, by eating the prohibited fruit.

Nothing weighs so much in the estimation of a human being, as profit; the accession of good. What will not a man sacrifice for even a distant prospect of profit—of gain? Eve expected to be like the gods; that is, as the angels.

She must have known that there were such beings as angels; and who can doubt but that they made their appearance to our first parents in Paradise, as they appeared in after times to the patriarchs, and prophets. And it is, moreover, not improbable, but that the angels assumed a most glorious appearance. Hence the idea of being like them, produced a most fascinating effect on the mind of Eve.

But this was all mere artifice with the tempter, who knew that, instead of becoming as gods, they would be more like fiends, by eating of the fruit of the forbidden tree. Oh, how many of the sons and daughters of Eve have been lured by the tempting bait of ambition; and who by aspiring after some ideal good, have plunged themselves into an abyss of misery.

4th. Eve was beguiled by satan's plausible reasoning with her on the subject before them. He knew that nothing could be effected by an open attack; that everything must appear plausible and imposing to the innocent subject of

his satanic wiles. He, therefore, began by questioning Eve, saying ; "Hath God said, ye shall not eat of every tree in the garden?" Here was just enough to excite curiosity. Hath God said such a thing? Is this reasonable? What could such fair fruit have been created for, but to be eaten?

Thus he seems to have reasoned with our unsuspecting Mother, Eve. But it is highly probable that more conversation was had than is here recorded.

How forcibly does this teach us to resist the first temptation to evil ; to hold no parley with the enemy of our peace and happiness.

"Watch, and pray," says Christ, "lest ye enter into temptation." "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."

5th. Furthermore, Eve was beguiled by satan's asserting that it was a mistake, under which she was laboring, saying, "You shall not surely die." He first tempted her to doubt, by an awful insinuating question, and then to disbelieve by a bold, daring and mischievous lie ; the first lie that was ever uttered upon the earth. This is the usual process by which the devil carries on his malicious designs, exciting men to question the truth of God's declarations. And he still preaches the same doctrine, and with as much earnestness and daring as ever ; "You shall not surely die." He reasons the case : God is a being of unbounded goodness ; mercy is His darling attribute, hence it is unreasonable to suppose that He will pun-

ish His feeble and erring creatures eternally for their offences in this world. Eat, drink, and be merry ; follow the dictates of your hearts, for your salvation is secure. Beware, oh, beware brethren, for this infamous liar, this arch-deceiver, this monster of hell is ever active, and ever bent upon your ruin. Beware, we say again, lest you fall a prey to his satanic artifices, before you are aware of it. "Watch and pray," be sober, be vigilant, for satan seeks continually the destruction of your immortal souls.

Remember, he not only boldly contradicted the truth of God, but artfully and basely insinuated that God had prohibited the eating of this fruit through some sinister design. Hear what he said : "For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." II. The act of the woman. "I did eat." This was the act in which consisted what is called, the original transgression, or sin.

"Thus it was that "sin entered into the world, and death by sin, so that death passed upon all men." Now observe,—

1st, That the sin of Eve was purely a personal act, "I did eat." Whatever blame may be imputed to the serpent, still the act of eating the forbidden fruit was all her own. The sin of the tempter was a totally distinct thing from the sin of Eve. There was no force, no constraint, no overruling power to compel her to eat the prohibited fruit. The concurrence of

her will, the taking and handling of the fruit, and the eating of it, were all personal acts, for which Eve only was accountable.

Our sins also are personal. Temptations we all have, as well as innate tendencies to evil, but these are not imputed to us as sins, until we give them the concurrence of our wills, and sanction them by deliberate indulgence.

2nd. The sin of Eve was a carnal act; "I did eat." Here was the sin—in eating. The temptation was presented to her senses, "The woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise."

It is difficult to say how Mother Eve could see this, unless we admit with Milton, that she saw the serpent eat of the tree, and that he told her he thereby had gained the faculties of speech and reason, whence she inferred its power to make one wise, and was persuaded to think, "If it makes a brute creature rational, why not a rational creature divine?"

What if "the tree was good for food?" there were trees in abundance all around her, laden with fruit as fair and good as that which she coveted. What if the fruit was "pleasant to the eyes?" must everything be eaten which is grateful to the faculty of vision? What if it was "a tree to be desired to make one wise?" Is there not much knowledge that is quite unnecessary for man to possess—and is not a desire to understand such knowledge a destructive desire? But it would seem that our first

parents, who knew so much, did not know this, that they knew enough. In the case before us, we have a clear illustration as to how "lust conceived and brought forth sin."

Most of our temptations come to us through the medium of our senses, and sin is chiefly gratifying as it affects the animal nature of man. Sinners are called carnal men, that is, literally, fleshly men—men who are in the flesh, who live after the flesh, and who sow to the flesh; and though sin is primarily seated in the mind, yet the members of the body become its instruments in objective wrong-doing.

3rd. The sin of Eve, was a prohibited act. It was a direct violation of a known, plain, and positive law. The law was as plain as language could make it, and it had been clearly and emphatically announced to them, by the Lord God, and very earnestly and distinctly impressed upon their minds.

Mother Eve's entire conversation with the serpent, evinces that she knew the law, and that it was very positive in its terms,—“Thou shalt not eat of it.”

All our sins are of a similar character, as they are transgressions of plain, positive, and known precepts. But it may be objected by some persons, that the laws of God are unknown to many people, that they do not understand them. This may be true of multitudes, but the fact forms no excuse in their case. The laws of God are contained in His word, and that word is accessible; hence,

men's ignorance of their duties to God, and to men, instead of forming an apology for their sins and wrong-doings, becomes, under the circumstances, their crime; they might know the will of God concerning them, if they would.

4th. The sin of Eve was a presumptuous act. In eating of the forbidden fruit, she must have done so presuming that the Lord God was insincere in what He had said concerning it—that His words were not the words of truth; that the death with which she was threatened would not be inflicted; that she would escape the threatened punishment, though she violated His law.

Such is the presumption of many of Eve's posterity at the present day. They do not dare to give the lie to God, by any verbal declaration, but they act as if they believed that He is insincere in what He has said in His word, and many of this class are given up, apparently, to "strong delusions, that they should believe a lie, that they all might be damned who believe not the truth, but have pleasure in unrighteousness."

Oh, when will men be wise? When will they credit the truth of God, and, as accountable, eternity-bound creatures, comply with the whole counsel of Him, "in whom they live, and move, and have their being?" Oh, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him,

and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon."

5th. The sin of Eve was a ruinous act. She no sooner became a sinner, than she became a tempter, also. Having eaten of the forbidden fruit herself, "she gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat," and thus ruin was entailed upon the twain, and upon their posterity.

"He scrupled not to eat !

Against his better knowledge—

Earth trembled from her entrails, as again

In pangs, and Nature gave a second groan.

Sky lowered, and muttering thunder, some sad drops
Wept, at completing of the mortal sin."

Whether Adam would have eaten without the seduction of Eve, is uncertain. Adam was not deceived; he knew better, but to please his wife, and being also ambitious, perhaps, to be like the gods, intelligent and holy as he was, he plunged himself into the same condition of ruin. Well might Adam mourn over the sad predicament in which he now found himself, and say, as Milton makes him express his condition:

"How shall I behold the face

Henceforth of God or angel, erst with joy

And raptures oft beheld ?"

"Ye cedars, with innumerable boughs,

Hide me, where I never may see them more!"

Sinners are not satisfied to stand alone—they seek to entice others into the snares in which they themselves are entangled. This assertion needs no proof, it is a fact which is manifest to

all observers. Our eyes witness the confirmation of this truth, every day and every hour. Alas ! how many conduct themselves in this way, regardless of God's promises to the righteous, on the one hand, and regardless of His denunciations against the wicked, on the other.

From this subject we learn :—1st, The true character of natural depravity. Man was created holy, but not absolutely immutable.

2d. That absolute unchangeableness belongs only to God ; and the contemplation of this divine perfection should raise our minds in admiration, teach us to imitate, as far as our frailty will permit, that constancy and steadfastness which we adore, and should excite trust and confidence in the Divine Being.

SERMON.

ACTS, 3:19.

“Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.”

In the chapter before us, we are informed that on a certain day, when the apostles, Peter and John were entering the temple, through the gate which was called Beautiful, they saw a poor cripple who had been lame from his birth, lying there, at the gate, and begging alms of those who passed him.

As soon as he discovered the apostles, he earnestly begged charity of them, upon which St. Peter answered, "Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have, give I thee. In the name of Jesus Christ, of Nazareth, rise up and walk. And Peter took him by the right hand, and helped him up, and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength," and he accompanied the apostles into the temple, "walking, and leaping, and praising God."

This individual was doubtless almost universally known by the people, who, seeing him walking, and praising God, were greatly amazed at the miracle which had been wrought.

They, therefore, collected in great numbers around the apostles; and St. Peter, observing the astonishment of the multitude, and thinking it a favorable opportunity to preach to them Jesus, and him crucified, addressed them, saying, "Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk?"

"The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob; the God of our fathers, hath glorified His Son Jesus, whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go. But ye denied the holy One, and the just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; and killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead, whereof we are witnesses. And His name, through faith in his name, hath made

this man strong, whom ye see and know ; yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all. And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did eat, as did also your rulers. But those things which God before had showed by the mouth of all His prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled. Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord."

In treating upon these words we shall consider: 1st, The change prescribed as necessary to man's pardon ; and 2nd, The arguments employed to induce men to comply with the direction given.

"Repent, and be converted." Repentance, from its very nature, supposes past misconduct; for where there has been no misconduct, or where a man's conduct could not have been otherwise, then, repentance is not only unnecessary, but clearly impossible. And, of course, repentance towards God, the thing here prescribed, necessarily supposes misconduct towards the Great Author of our being.

And such misconduct must necessarily have arisen either from inconsideration, or from daring, or both together. From invincible ignorance it could not have arisen. The Jews were not left to infer their obligations and duties to the Divine Being, merely from the dim light of nature. They had the best possible means which the age afforded for knowing

these things—they had line upon line, and precept upon precept, and yet they neither lived answerably to their obligations, nor performed the known will of God.

Indeed, in the age in which they lived, and were addressed in the language before us, they were enormously impious, profligate and corrupt. All orders, distinctions and degrees among them, had, as it were, unanimously agreed that religion was a farce, and that its essence consisted in nothing but grimace and foppery, pomp, and ostentation.

They were so far lost to all sense of public decency, as to convert their holy temple into a market house, and suffer its sacred courts to serve the convenient purposes of the most sordid and despicable traffic. Such was the unexampled ostentation and hypocrisy of their doctors and rabbis, that they made public proclamation by the sound of a trumpet, when they distributed charity, and would kneel down at the corners of the most prominent and crowded streets, and there make long and vehement prayers, with no higher aim than to draw to themselves the eyes and ears of the superstitious multitude; no higher motives than to make themselves to be admired and applauded as patterns of heavenly-mindedness. Their ultimate object, in all their acts of religious devotion, was that they might be seen of men, and secure the vain breath of popular applause.

The whole nation, as such, seems to have

been infected with spiritual pride, the most odious and detestable species of pride that can occupy the human heart, and actuate and control the human life. They sacrificed everything to show and pageantry. They would devour widows' houses, deprive the friendless widow, and the destitute orphan of their just dues, and yet, amid all this, they would assume the most mortified appearance, disfigure their faces, so as to appear to men to fast; use affectedly long devotions, while yet they did not hesitate a moment to infringe the strongest moral obligations, justice, judgment, mercy, and truth, and yet observe with the most scrupulous and punctilious exactness, all the little ceremonious tricks, about the tithe of mint, anise and cummin, and the little, traditionary maxims of their rabbinical ancestors.

Everything was venal. The high-priesthood was an object of traffic. Nothing but hypocrisy swayed them. They were divided also, into several religious factions, and split into sects, and parties, which, agreeable to the national acrimony, and innate complexional virulence and choler of this people, pursued each other with the most implacable fury, and deadly hatred. How universally depraved and abandoned the Jewish nation was, at this time, will be seen from the testimony of Josephus.

"Both publicly and privately," says the historian, "they were universally corrupt; they vied with each other, which should surpass the other in impiety against God, and injustice

towards their fellow-men. The great men harassed the people, and the people studied to ruin the great men."

"In a word," he says, in another place, "there never was a city that suffered such calamities, nor a race of men, from the foundation of the world, that ever were more profligate and abandoned."

Indeed the ingratitude and disobedience of the Jewish nation, a nation eminently favored by Jehovah, were notorious and flagrant. And in nothing were these more apparent, than in the rejection and crucifixion of the immaculate Son of the Most High.

Most necessary, therefore, was it that this people should be required to review their conduct towards God; to sorrow over their undutiful and impious behavior towards Him, and amend their ways. Nor is such a step less necessary for us, at the present day. Are not all men commanded to repent, and obey the injunctions of Jehovah?

By the gospel, "God commandeth all men everywhere to repent—for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." But if there was no written commandment on this duty, might it not be fairly inferred to be our duty simply from our conduct towards Jehovah, as this may be seen in the light of nature? Have not His goodness and mercy toward us, brought us under great obligations to him? But who amongst us has always acted conformably to those obligations?

We are not dependent, however, upon the light of nature, simply, but are favored with a most explicit and perfect revelation of God's will concerning man, and we have, none of us, perfectly kept the commandments of the Bible. And even while we have pretended to believe in the existence of God, and to believe the gospel of Christ, and to receive Christ as our Savior, have we not practically treated Him as a deceiver, and acted the part of those wicked and rebellious Jews over again in our own persons?

We may have cherished feelings of indignation against the Jews, for their base and unworthy treatment towards the Lord Jesus Christ; but meanwhile, we have failed practically, to evince towards Him, in fact, any greater regard, ourselves! Hence, if those heartless and ungodly Jews needed repentance, and reformation of life, we also need to experience a like change of heart and conduct. Nay, more, as we enjoy greater light, and greater advantages than did the Jews, in the days of Christ, so we have greater need, and should the more readily throw ourselves at the feet of Jesus, in tears and penitential sorrow, and acknowledge our sins and transgressions against Him, and plead for mercy and pardon.

2nd. But we are directed to be converted—"Repent and be converted."

Here a question arises, and one too, that has often been regarded by persons as being of great importance. It has been asked, "How

can I be converted? Must I not wait, must I not bide God's own time?" I cannot convert myself, cannot do anything till God makes me willing, in the day of his power. But we answer, the day of God's power is now, and has been, ever since Christianity was introduced into the world, by the only begotten Son of God. The great apostle Paul says, "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." The reason why men are not converted, is, because they do not want to be, are not willing to be made christians.

The Savior says, "Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life." Here is the secret of the sinner's trouble, not that he cannot, but that he will not be converted.

Be it known unto you, sinner, that God will never coerce, never force you to be a christian, contrary to your free will; that if you ever become a changed and holy man, it will be when you want to be that, and when you actually sacrifice everything, even your own self upon the altar of God's abounding mercy in Christ Jesus.

The holy spirit is ever ready, and ever able, to "work in you both to will and to do," if you are but truly willing, and deeply anxious to be made a new creature in Christ Jesus.

The term conversion ordinarily signifies to turn about, or the act of turning or changing from one state to another; hence a change of mind and course of conduct. In the text, the word means, to turn from every known evil, by

turning unto the Lord. And we may know that we are thus turned unto Him, when we truly desire to be delivered from the love and bondage of sin, and to enjoy the favor of God, as the highest and best good, when we find our supreme delight in the study of His word, and in communion and fellowship with God, and with His Son, Jesus Christ.

To be thus turned unto the Lord, is necessary to prove the sincerity of our repentance, not only, but also to secure unto ourselves the witness of the Holy Spirit, testifying to our minds the fact of our acceptance with God, in the Beloved, and our adoption into His family as His sons and daughters.

For, to profess repentance for sin, and still to continue under its enslaving power, and practically, to remain identified with the unconverted world, we should but evince, before men, our insincerity, and hypocrisy. Religion demands a radical change in our social position, as well as a change of mind and heart. The voice of the Holy Ghost, on this subject, is, "Come out from among them," the world, "and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you."

Hence to be truly converted, to have the eyes of the understanding opened; to be turned from moral and spiritual darkness to moral and spiritual light, and turned from the power of the devil unto God, is no hope-so affair, but a personal experience, a practical acquaintance with facts realized, as truly, and

as sensibly, as it is possible for one to know, either mental or physical pain, or pleasure, joy, or sorrow. The real Christian can truthfully say, "I know that I have passed from death unto life."

II. Two arguments are employed in our text, to move us to comply with the direction given.

The first argument used to secure our compliance with the duty we have already explained, is, that if we repent, and be converted, "Our sins shall be blotted out."

This phrase, "Your sins may be blotted out," may allude, perhaps, to the practice of ancient monarchs, who kept what are called, books of remembrance. In order to render those records more durable, they were, sometimes, cut on tables of stone, with the point of some hard substance. Now, the blotting out of sin, may possibly refer to the effacing of such a record as we have indicated in any man's favor. We read in the 44th chapter of the prophecy of Isaiah, "I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins, return unto me; for I have redeemed thee." Or these words may refer to the blotting out of the curse that was written against a Jewess, when her fidelity to her husband was suspected, by the waters of jealousy. We read in Numbers, 6th chapter, "And the priest shall write these curses in a book, and shall blot them out with the bitter water," etc.

"That your sins may be blotted out." Now,

that we may see the value of the benefit tendered in these words, let us reflect on the disadvantage resulting to us from the existence of such a record, kept by Jehovah, in respect to our characters and actions in this world.

It being a standing record of our utter unfitness to receive or appreciate any spiritual good, and consequently the impropriety of God bestowing any such special favor upon us, that record operates as an effectual bar to our salvation.

“Your transgressions,” says the Prophet Isaiah, “have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid His face from you, that he will not hear.”

The record being a standing declaration of our desert on account of our sins, and our rebellions against our Maker, it operates to separate us from God not only, but to widen the breach already existing between Him and our souls, and to render our reconciliation to Him more difficult, not only, but more and more doubtful.

The Psalmist plainly alludes to the breach between God and the impenitent, when he says, “Salvation is far from the wicked: for they seek not thy statutes.” After all that has been done by the blessed Redeemer, or revealed and promised in scripture, or vouchsafed by Providence as means of grace, “salvation is far from the wicked,” or impenitent, for they seek not the statutes of God. In view of these solemn facts, may we not ask, O, sin-

ner, whether it be not dangerous, extremely dangerous, to live on in sin, and in rebellion against God, and, by so doing, to increase the volume, and intensify the turpitude of that fearful record against you in the book of God's remembrance? Your reason, your conscience, and the word of God, combine to warn you of your danger, and to persuade you to turn, and flee from your perilous condition, and lay hold on God, in Christ Jesus, by faith in His blood, that you perish not.

The blood of Jesus Christ alone, can cancel the handwriting of God against the impenitent. We are "justified by His blood, have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace," and the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin."

O, how grateful we should be because Christ, our adorable Redeemer, by His sufferings and death, has made it possible for God the Father, to be just, and yet pardon the sins of all who truly repent, and come to Him by and through the crucified, but risen and exalted, and glorified Christ!

The second argument in the text, to persuade us to comply with the direction given, is, that if we repent and be converted, "times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord." The proximate sense of this expression seems to be that those who repent and are converted, may expect the pardon of their sins, and this is always spoken of in the

scriptures as a great privilege, a great blessing to all those who embrace the gospel. The phrase intimates, that when God forgives sin, He remembers it no more against the sinner. The Prophet Hezekiah, in his song of thanksgiving, Isaiah 38:17, says: "But thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption, for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back."

And the same prophet represents God as saying, "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." Thus when God forgives sin and iniquity, it is forgotten, as that which is blotted out; all the bitter things written against the sinner, are wiped out, as it were, with a sponge.

To be converted then, to be made a new creature, a new creation, in Christ Jesus, is the most refreshing, and the most ennobling and happifying experience which it is possible and even desirable for man to realize in the present world.

To enjoy the divine favor, to have fellowship with God, and with His Son Jesus Christ, and to have the assurance that eternal salvation with God, in Heaven, shall be our portion, at last, is the most invigorating, enlivening and joy-inspiring blessing of which man or angel can conceive. He who is thus converted and saved, can truthfully exclaim with the poet,—

"Oh, the rapturous hight,
Of the holy delight,
Which I feel in the life-giving blood.
Of my Savior possessed,
I am perfectly bless'd,
As if filled with the fulness of God."

SERMON.

Ps. 23:4.

"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil ; for thou art with me ; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

Job affirms that "Man that is born of woman is of few days, and full of trouble."

Universal observation and experience attest the truth of this assertion. Every man's cup of life is tintured, more or less, with the elements of grief and pain, disappointment and unrest. How widely soever the condition and circumstances of men may differ, one from the other, this truth remains the same, in regard to each. No human being is so far exalted in his nature and circumstances in life, as to be above the vicissitudes and common ills appertaining to this present life ; nor is there any one who is so debased by nature and external circumstances as to be beyond the reach of life's ills and woes.

Even piety itself, with all its interesting and

important advantages, cannot claim exemption from existing evils, which have come upon man, as the legitimate sequence of his apostasy from original innocence, rectitude and happiness..

The children of God, whether they occupy the palace and rejoice amid the abundance of the good gifts of God, or whether they dwell in the humble cottage, or the rude hut, they do ever testify to the same fact, that the afflictions of the righteous are both numerous, and various, and are often exceeding difficult to be endured. But while it is true that religion does not exempt its possessors from the common trials and sorrows of life, it still furnishes ample sources of support and consolation, amid the afflictions and adversities incident to our earthly pilgrimage. True godliness inspires the believer with holy fortitude and magnanimity of soul, even amid the most dangerous and appalling circumstances in life.

When King David was fleeing before Saul, who "hunted him as a partridge in the mountains," he asserted his relation to his God, by a very beautiful reference to the occupation of his early life, "The Lord is my Shepherd," and on this interesting and important truth he rested his faith, his confidence, and trust. And, though Providence seemed to direct his way through the wilderness of Hareth, he yet courageously declared, "I will fear no evil."

Now, we have in the words of our text, A. A dreary journey implied. B. The cour-

age of the traveler specified. G. The principle of his confidence described.

The dreary journey implied in the words before us, may, for our edification, be contemplated under several aspects.

“Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death.”

1st. In the strictly literal sense, we understand holy David to be following the leadings of Divine Providence, as the flocks of Asia follow their piping shepherds from one place to another. As he progresses in his journey, he approaches the dark valley of Hareth, a country generally dreaded on account of its gloomy and forbidding aspect.

Barren, as to soil, and dangerous because of its tenantry, it being a common resort of ferocious animals, and it may be that the path of David lay through that exposed district.

But trusting in the power and goodness, and faithfulness of his God, and bountiful benefactor, his soul was not appalled by the dreary scenes before and around him.

Wherever the hand of Providence leads, or fixes the Christian's dwelling place, however exposed and unpropitious in their appearance these may be, he may yet with calmness and fortitude, proceed in the one, and rest quietly in the other.

“The Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.”

2nd. The implied idea before us may be re-

garded as capable of a metaphorical application, referring to the various afflictions, and painful exercises to which the righteous are exposed. These trying dispensations vary widely in their nature, embracing among others, physical defects, domestic afflictions and bereavements, secular embarrassment, satanic influence, and a low state of the Church of God. These several forms of trial, considered separately, or combined, constitute some of the prolific sources of sorrow which occur in the experience of Christians, and are strikingly represented by the figure of death, from the sameness of their origin, and general tendency.

3d. We may also consider this idea as applicable to that solemn and unknown period when we "shall go the way whence we shall not return."

The devout Psalmist always bore in mind, that, like his fathers before him, he would sooner or later be called to "walk through the valley of the shadow of death."

But such was his confidence in God, and in the Divine promise, that he was enabled to say, even, as it were, in the very face of death, "I will fear no evil, for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

The Christian must die; God hath decreed it; "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Our mortal and immortal parts must separate; the one return to the ground whence it was taken, the other to God, who gave it.

That change involves the separation of the

most tender relative ties—a separation from all terrestrial good, from home, and family, and friends; from the means of grace, the Church, and its sacraments and holy services, and exercises. Yet to the humble saint all these appalling considerations are but as “the shadow of death;” the sting is blunted, the poison is extracted, and shortly the full blaze of celestial glory will expunge the very remembrance of the dying pain, and chilling shade from the beautiful soul, except so far as remembrance will tend to augment the fervency of adoration, as in the case of the apostle, when he said, “This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.” “So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O, death, where is thy sting? O, grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be unto God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

How vastly different is it with the Christless infidel! The idea of death, how unwelcome, how terrifying; he cannot bear to contemplate the subject. As he approaches the boundary which separates between time and the great beyond, and conscious of his unfitness for the inheritance of the saints, but that he yet must appear before the Judge of the quick and dead, we need not wonder that he should choose,

rather to be annihilated, than to stand before the omniscient, the holy, and the just God, to render up an account of himself to Him.

“Conscience, the torturer of the soul, unseen,
Does fiercely brandish a sharp scourge within.
Severe decrees may keep our tongues in awe,
But to our thoughts what edict can give law ?
Even you yourself, to your own heart shall tell
Your crimes, and your own conscience be your hell.”

But religion, true religion, calms the troubled mind, and fills the soul with peace. How inestimable, how beyond all price is the religion of Christ, to the soul, in this unpropitious world!

“Religion ! O thou cherub ! heavenly bright !
O joys unmixed, and fathomless delight !
Thou, thou art all !”

II. The courage of the traveler specified. Man, by nature, is a subject of fear ; he has a natural repugnance to affliction, and every painful experience and exercise, and a tormenting fear of death and its consequences. Religion alone is adapted and adequate to change this condition, to take away this slavish fear and dread, and to inspire the soul with courage and confidence, and to effectually counteract the lamentable results of man’s apostasy.

The good man, in the exuberance of his loving trust in God, and in the promises and assurances of His word, boldly, and joyfully declares, “I will fear no evil.”

1st. The cherishing of anticipated evil, has often been the prolific source of unpleasant, and even painful and tormenting experiences

to injudicious and doubting followers of Christ. Anticipated trials and sufferings, which may never be realized at all, are allowed to unite with present trials, and thus to render the measure of afflictions and sorrows much greater than Providence intends that they shall be.

There seems to be no provision made in the Divine economy for the relief of anticipated, or borrowed trouble.

The promises of God have respect to present afflictions and trials, not future ones, to real, and not imaginary ones.

"As thy days, so shall thy strength be;" and our heavenly father reminds us that, "Sufficient is the day for the evil thereof."

A magnanimous soul, in the lively exercise of holy trust in God, does not bring trouble from afar, does not indulge anxious thoughts for the morrow. He is content in waiting upon the Lord. With David, he is prepared at all times, and in all places, to say, "What time I am afraid, I will trust in Thee."

Though commotions, revolutions, and desolation may pervade his country, yet he rests secure under the shadow of his Savior's protecting wings. And though he should be stripped of every earthly comfort, yet he trusts in God, and the Lord hears his cries, and protects and sustains, and comforts him. O, let us remember that our trials and afflictions continue but for a moment, comparatively speaking; they will soon come to an end, and we shall find in the future world, that our afflic-

tions, while in the body, have not had the effect of lessening the measure of our heavenly bliss, but, on the contrary, they shall be seen to have "worked for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory!"

Jesus, our adorable Savior, lives and lives for evermore, and He has said, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." And again, "I will never leave nor forsake you."

2nd. Again, unnecessary fears are also engendered, by impugning the wisdom of God, in the dispensations of Providence.

Men forget, even professing Christians, that infallibility sits at the helm of Providential government, directs the tempest, governs the storm, and says to the raging waves, and to the equally tumultuous passions of men, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed." "God makes the wrath of man to praise Him, and the remainder of wrath He restrains."

Omnipotence executes the purposes of wisdom, and both harmoniously co-operate with love, goodness, mercy and truth, in effecting the highest good of intelligent creatures, and thus accomplishes the ultimate design, even the declarative glory of God. Resting beneath this invulnerable panoply, pious confidence joyfully asserts, "I will fear no evil." Resting in the embrace of the "everlasting arms," the child of God has nothing to fear; there can be no danger to such an one, whatever may happen! All is well! Everlastingly well!

O, then, let no christian impugn the wisdom of God, in the dispensations of His providence; but rather believe that, "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose."

Let us dismiss every fear, and pray the Lord to so increase our faith, that we shall be enabled to "cast all our care upon Him, for He careth for us."

Let us "trust in the Lord forever; for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength."

3d. Needless fears arise also from our sinking into a state of inaction and despondency, in times of severe trial. Man is prone to doubt, and naturally inclines toward hopeless inaction, when severely exercised by some forms of affliction. No true Christian will claim never to be afraid. Some one has said, "we are men, and therefore liable to overthrow; we are feeble, and therefore unable to prevent it; we are sinful men, and therefore deserving it, and for all these reasons we are afraid."

Fear must be distinguished, however, into gracious and unregenerate fear. The former drives the soul to God, but the latter drives from Him.

Whether the fears of which we are sensible, at any time, arise from without or within, from past, present or future, from temporals or spirituals, from men or devils, let us maintain faith, and we shall soon recover courage.

The saints of all ages, and in all places, have had occasion to say, Thou, O God, hast proved

us, thou hast tried us, as silver is tried." And James assures us that when, in any way, or by any means, the reality of religion is tried, and the believer bears the trial, the experience is a blessing to him, an advantage and not a loss. Hear the declaration of the apostle, "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation : for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord has promised to them that love Him." A large part of God's dealings with His people is designed to keep them humble, and always sensible of their dependence upon Him.

The case of the Apostle Paul is an illustration of this truth. Lest he should be spiritually proud, lest he should become self-confident and vain, and suppose that he was a special favorite of Heaven, "there was given him a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of satan, to buffet him, lest he should be exalted above measure." It is both our wisdom, and our advantage, as Christians, to endure with patience and resignation to the Divine will, every trial and every affliction that befalls us, being assured that the grace of God will always be sufficient for us; that the blessed Savior will support us; that He will not suffer us to sink exhausted under our trials, and that we have nothing to fear.

Hence, when we are severely tried, let us not sink into despondency and inaction, but let us trust in the mercy and strength of our omnipotent Helper, and with Paul, affirm, "I can

do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

4th. Indulging immoderate sorrow, under afflictions and bereavement, is another source of needless solicitude and fear. Religion does not consist of stoical insensibility; it does not destroy the feelings of humanity, but it controls and sanctifies those emotions. Hence genuine piety, while, it is painfully alive to the common afflictions, sufferings, privations and sorrows incident to the present life, does not "sorrow without hope." While the tear of humanity steals down the cheek, the placid countenance of the sufferer proclaims the soul's peaceful resignation to the Divine allotment, in the spirit of the suffering Savior's words, "not my will, but Thine, be done."

The resignation of which we speak, was beautifully exemplified in the conduct of pious Job. After he had experienced the loss of all his possessions, including his entire family, so that he, in one moment, was written childless, yet he bravely maintained the possession and repose of his soul, saying, "Naked came I into the world, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

Truly, Job "feared no evil." He was rich in his apparent poverty, rich in his great and good thoughts of God.

His worldly goods were all gone; his children, his dearest and most valuable possessions, were taken away from him, but his God still

lived ; his God, the Author of all things that exist, was still his. God, his everlasting portion ! Happy, indeed, are they who, amid the vicissitudes and afflictions of this dying life, can say with the Psalmist, from a realizing sense of the truth, "The Lord is my light, and my salvation ; whom shall I fear ? The Lord is the strength of my life ; of whom shall I be afraid ?

"Courage, my soul ! while God is near,
What enemy hast thou to fear ?
How canst thou want a sure defence,
Whose refuge is Omnipotence ?"

One of the golden virtues of the true believer, is that of unresisting acquiescence to the will and providence of God.

This grace of practical, and joyful submission to the rulings of Jehovah, forms the very substratum of all real peace, joy, and strength, in the present life, and the practical guarantor of the ultimate possession and enjoyment of immortal glory in the life to come.

III. The principle or ground of this confidence described. "Thou art with me ; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me."

This confidence is not founded upon self-dependence, nor upon the boasted wisdom and power of man ; for the Psalmist was conversant with the expression of the prophet Jeremiah, "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord."

When David says, "Thou art with me," he

refers to the Lord Jehovah; to Him whom he owned as his Shepherd.

1st. This then, was confidence or belief in the abiding presence of God. The ubiquity, or presence of God in every place, at one and the same time, is a doctrine clearly taught in the Bible; and may be argued from His infinity, His power, which is everywhere, His providence which supplies all. Omnipresence is an attribute peculiar to God; it belongs to no creature; it is the exclusive property of the eternal God.

But by the ubiquity of His nature, God is present with all men, and with all men alike; and the Psalmist, when he says, "Thou art with me," does not refer to the omnipresence of God alone, or particularly, but to the covenanted, promised, spiritual presence of God with His people, the presence intended by our Savior, when He said to His witnessing disciples, just before He was taken up to Heaven, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

The Christian can say, in a higher, clearer, and more realistic sense than could David, "Thou art with me;" with me by thy spirit, thy providence, thy attending counsel and guidance; with me, at all times, in all places, and to the end of this militant life.

Those who are Christians indeed, are declared to be "the temples of the living God;" and God says, "I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and I will be their God, and they shall

be my people."

Rejoicing in the consciousness of this indwelling of God, by His Spirit, the believer can joyfully sing—

Thou art the earnest of His love
The pledge of joys to come :
And thy soft wings, celestial Dove,
Will safely bear me home."

2nd. Confidence in the sufficiency of Divine protection. "Thy rod." The rod is sometimes put, by a pastoral metaphor, to signify a tribe or a people; "Remember thy congregation, which thou hast purchased of old, the rod of thine inheritance which thou hast redeemed."

But a rod has been considered a very significant emblem of power and authority. The empire of the Messiah is sometimes represented by a rod of iron, to show its power and its might. Hence how expressive is the Psalmist's language. How invulnerable is the defence of the righteous. They have the whole authority and power of the omniscient and omnipotent Creator, Preserver and Governor of the universe, for their protection.

With such a defence, they may very properly bid defiance to the united phalanx of earth and hell. Ps. 62:1-8; 97:1-3; Isa. 44:17.

There is, then, no need that God's people should fear any danger, any evil, either in life or in the hour and article of death.

3d. Confidence in the amplitude of Divine support. "Thy staff," "they comfort me."

As the rod is taken as an emblem of author-

ity and power, so the staff is a significant representation of support. The same power which protects and secures the righteous from all their enemies, may be confidently relied on by them as a support under all their troubles, and painful experiences; for though their afflictions should rise and rage like the waves of the sea, they can never overwhelm them, while they lean on the arm of the Almighty. God will never suffer the righteous to be moved. "He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might He increaseth strength."

Jesus, Jehovah, is the portion and consolation, the defender and redeemer of His people. He encourages his followers with the announcement of His gracious purpose, saying, "I go to prepare a place for you," but, "I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

May we not conclude, therefore, with holy David, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

If we are His people, in deed and in truth, we are now in the house of His grace, and if we prove faithful unto death, we shall dwell with him at last, in the mansions of glory.

"Yes, when this flesh and heart shall fail,
And mortal life shall cease,
We shall possess within the veil,
A life of joy and peace."

SERMON.

THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST.

LUKE 24:34.

"The Lord is risen indeed."

Shortly after the glorious resurrection of the illustrious Jesus, He appeared unto and accompanied two of his disconsolate disciples, who were on their way to a village called Emmaus, and who were deeply engaged in conversation, relative to the great things which had recently transpired in the metropolis of Judea. Christ, whom these disciples did not recognize as their Master, entered immediately into conversation with them, by inquiring what event had so closely engaged them in discourse, and why they appeared so sorrowful and dejected? One of them, whose name was Cleopas, being greatly surprised at this question, asked the supposed stranger if it were possible that he could be ignorant of the surprising

events that had so recently happened in Jerusalem ; events that had astonished the whole city, and were then the general topics of conversation among all the people. Jesus answered, "what things ? What surprising events do you mean ?" Cleopas presuming the Son of God to be ignorant of what had happened, proceeded to relate the particulars, by saying, "the events to which I refer are those which have happened concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet, mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him. But we trusted that it had been he which should redeem Israel ; and besides all this, to-day is the third day since these things were done. Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulcher. And when they found not his body, they came, saying that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive. And certain of them which were with us went to the sepulcher, and found it, even as the women had said, but him they saw not."

After the disciple had concluded his discourse, Jesus answered and said, "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken ! Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory ?" And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded to them in all the Scriptures

the things concerning himself."

When the two disciples, accompanied by our blessed Lord, arrived at the village whither they were going, and Jesus seemed as if he would have passed on, and traveled farther, they were desirous of his company, pressed him in the strongest manner, to stay with them that night, the day being then far spent. To this request he consented, and when they sat down to meat, behold they recognized in the supposed stranger their Lord and Master. Highly pleased with the discovery, they returned immediately to Jerusalem and announced to their brethren the fact of their Master's resurrection, in the language of my text, "The Lord is risen indeed."

In our further remarks upon the portion of Scripture before us, we shall consider,—

1st. The glorious event announced.

2nd, Its certainty, and

3d, The heart-cheering consequences thereof.

1st. The glorious event, "The Lord is risen."

It will be necessary in the commencement to consider for a moment, the person who is denominated in the language of the text, "The Lord." This person was the same whose birth was announced by an angel, eighteen centuries since, to a few obscure shepherds, who were watching their flocks at night, on the plains of Bethlehem; namely, Jesus Christ. That Jesus, who was promised as a Savior to the parents of our race, and in reference to whom the prophets spake, in such lofty, mag-

nificent terms, as they in rapid succession mounted the prophetic car. That Jesus, who, by his almighty fiat, made the lame to leap for joy, the dumb to sing His praises, the deaf to hear His soothing voice, and the blind to see his glory. That Jesus, whose agony in the garden, wrung blood instead of sweat from the pores of His body, when the whole artillery of the internal regions was marshaled against Him. That Jesus, whom consummate malice, scourged, crowned with thorns, and to cap the climax, nailed to the accursed tree. That Jesus, who, while suffering all the agonies of crucifixion, prayed for the infuriated rabble, his murderers, who cried out with one voice, saying, "Crucify him, crucify him." That Jesus, who is the heir of all things, but who, for our sakes, became poor, that we through his poverty, might be rich."

This, brethren, was the person, the glorious man, the exalted God, who is called in the language of our text, "The Lord."

That the immaculate Jesus died on the cross, is an indisputable fact. The reality of His death is circumstantially and fully stated, though if no circumstantial evidence had been adduced, it is not to be supposed that they who had sought His death with so much eagerness would be inattentive to the full execution of the sentence for which they had clamored. The execution was public; He was crucified with common malefactors, and in the usual place of execution. The soldiers broke not

his legs, the usual practice, when they would hasten the death of malefactors who were executed in this manner, and thus the scripture was fulfilled. "A bone of Him shall not be broken."

His enemies knew that He had predicted His resurrection, and would, therefore, be careful that he should not be removed from the cross before death had actually taken place. Pilate refused to deliver the body for burial, until he had expressly inquired of the officers on duty, whether He was already dead.

Nor was He taken away to an unknown, or distant tomb for interment. Joseph of Arimathea made no secret of the place where he had buried Him. It was in his own family tomb, and the Pharisees knew where to direct the watch which was to guard the body against the approach of his disciples. The reality of His death is therefore established.

Christ died on the cross and was buried. Yes, he who clothes himself with light as with a garment, and walks upon the wings of the wind, was pleased to wear the habiliments of mortality, and dwell among the prostrate dead.

Who can repeat the wondrous truths too often? Who can dwell upon the enchanting theme too long?

He who sits in glory, and diffuses bliss among all the heavenly hosts, was once a pale and bloody corpse, and pressed the floor of a sepulcher. "O death," says a beautiful writer, "how great was thy triumph in that hour?"

Never did thy gloomy realms contain such a prisoner before. Prisoner, did I say? No, He was more than conqueror ! He rose far more mighty than Sampson from a transient slumber; broke down the gates, and demolished the strongholds of those dark dominions !

And this, O mortals, is your consolation and security ! The sacred historian informs us, that early in the morning on the first day of the week, even before yonder luminary had cast his refulgent beams upon the landscape, Mary Magdalena, and Mary, the mother of James, went to the place where the body of their departed friend had been entombed, for the purpose of embalming it, ignorant of the guard that had been placed before the sepulcher. Their whole care and consultation on the way was, how they might remove the stone that was rolled against the mouth of the tomb. But before their arrival at the place, the shock of a tremendous earthquake was felt, and an angel clothed in celestial light, descended from heaven, and rolled from the mouth of the sepulcher, the stone that was placed against it. And lo ! the crucified Jesus arose, and left the tomb, with the same body which had been nailed to the accursed tree, the marks of his crucifixion being still strikingly apparent. And did he rise ? Hear, O ye nations ! hear it, O ye dead ! the theme, the joy ! O, the burst gates, the crushed sting, the demolished throne ! the last gasp of vanquished death ! Shout heaven and earth ; this sum of good to man,

whose nature then took wing, and mounted with him from the tomb.

When the women had arrived at the place, they had free entrance into the sepulcher, but were not a little surprised at looking into it to find an angel, gloriously appareled, sitting in the place where the body of Jesus had lain. Frightened at so unexpected a sight, they were on the point of turning back, when the angel, to banish their fears, told them that he knew their errand: "Fear not, for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here, for He is risen as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly, and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead." And they departed with fear and joy, and did run to bring his disciples word.

But is it a fact that Christ arose from the dead? We answer, without hesitation, in the affirmative.; "The Lord is risen indeed."

As regards the certainty of the resurrection of Christ, we need say but little. That the resurrection of Jesus was possible, will appear very evident, when we consider that there is nothing impossible with God, the creator, preserver, and ruler of the myriads of beings in this world, and the innumerable worlds which float in the immensity of space, and who, according to the scriptures, ushered into existence all things, from the tallest arch-angel who burns in the temple above, to the most diminutive insect that floats upon the air. But notwithstanding these thoughts, some of Adam's

degenerate posterity may have doubt of the fact of the resurrection of Christ. In order to remove those doubts, it will be necessary to examine the testimony we have relative to the fact. By both parties, by the Pharisees on the one part, and by the Disciples on the other part, it was agreed that the body of our Lord was missing, and that in a state of death it was never more seen. The sepulcher was made sure, the stone at the mouth being sealed, and a watch of sixty Roman soldiers appointed to guard it, and yet the body was not to be found. Let us see, then, how each party accounts for this fact. The disciples affirm that two of their company going early in the morning to the sepulcher to embalm the body, saw an angel descend and roll away the stone, sit upon it, and invite them to see the place where their Lord had lain, informing them that he was risen, and commanding them to tell the disciples of the fact; that others went to the sepulcher and found not the body, though the grave clothes remained; that at different times he appeared to them, both separately, and when assembled; that they conversed with Him, that He partook of their food; that they touched His body, that He continued to make His appearance among them for nearly six weeks, and then, after giving them much instruction and counsel, he finally led them out as far as Bethany, and in the presence of them all, ascended into the clouds of heaven. This is the statement of the disciples.

The manner in which the Jewish Sanhedrim accounts for the absence of our Lord's body from the sepulcher, is that the Roman soldiers having slept on their post, the disciples came and stole away the corpse. We know of no other account. Neither in their earliest books nor traditions, is there any other attempt to explain the alleged resurrection of Jesus.

We are warranted, therefore, in concluding that the Pharisees had nothing but this to oppose the positive testimony of the disciples; who also added and published to the world, that the Roman soldiers related to the Pharisees "all things" that were done, the earthquake, the appearance of the angel, and the absence of the body of Jesus, but that they, (the soldiers) were bribed to say, "His disciples came by night and stole Him away, while we slept."

It was in a state of considerable agitation, that this absurd and self-exposing rumor was hastily gotten up, and as hastily published.

We may add also, that it was hastily abandoned; for it is remarkable, that it is never adverted to by the Pharisees in any of their legal processes instituted at Jerusalem against the first preachers of Christ, as the risen Messiah, within a few days after the event itself. On all these occasions they affirm the fact of the resurrection, before the very men who had originated the tale of the stealing away of the body; and in none of these instances did the chief priests oppose this story to the explicit

testimony of His disciples having seen, felt and conversed with Jesus after His passion.

The absurdity involved in the only testimony ever brought against the resurrection of our Lord, rendered it indeed impossible to maintain the story. That a Roman guard should be off their watch, or asleep; a fault which the military law of that people punished with death, was most incredible; that if they were asleep, the timid disciples of Christ should dare to make the attempt, when the noise of removing the stone, and the bearing away of the body might awaken them, is very improbable, and above all, as it has been often put, either the soldiers were awake or asleep; if awake, why did they suffer a few unarmed peasants and women to take away the body? and if asleep, how come they to know that the disciples stole Him away, or that He was stolen at all?

Against the fact of the resurrection of Christ, we may then with confidence say, there is no testimony whatever; it stands like every other fact in the Evangelical history, entirely uncontradicted, from the earliest ages to the present.

The manner in which this testimony is given in its favor, so far from the evangelists having written in concert, they give an account of the transaction so varied as to make it clear that they wrote independently of each other, and yet so agreeing in the leading facts, and so easily capable of reconciliation in those minute circumstances in which some discrepancy at

first sight appears, that their evidence in every part comes with the air of honesty and truth.

Their own accounts sufficiently prove, that they were not incredulous as to the fact when announced, and so not disposed to be imposed upon by an imagination.

This indeed was impossible. The appearances of Christ were too numerous, and were continued for too long a time, forty days. They could not mistake, and it is impossible that they should deceive; impossible that upwards of five hundred persons, to whom Christ appeared, should have been persuaded by the artful few that they had seen and conversed with Christ, or to agree, not only without reward, but in renunciation of all interest, and in hazard of all dangers, and of death itself, to continue to assert a falsehood.

Nor did a long period elapse before the fact of the resurrection was proclaimed, nor was a distant place chosen in which to make the first report of it. These would have been suspicious circumstances, but on the contrary, the disciples testify the fact from the day of the resurrection itself. One of them in a public speech on the day of the pentecost, addressed to a mixed multitude, affirms it, and the same testimony is given by all the apostles, before the great council twice, and this too, was done at Jerusalem, the scene of the whole transaction, and in the presence of those most interested in detecting the falsehood. Their evidence was given, not only before private, but public

persons, before magistrates and tribunals, before philosophers, and rabbis, before courtiers, and before lawyers.

To this testimony of the apostles was added the seal of miracles, wrought as publicly and being as unequivocal in their nature, as open to public investigation, and as numerous as those of their Lord Himself.

Again, the miracle of the gift of tongues was in proof of the resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ, and the miracles of healing were wrought by the apostles in their charter's name, and therefore were the proofs, both of His resurrection and their commission.

Thus, brethren, we have offered for your consideration some of the evidence we have in support of the certainty of Christ's resurrection; "We speak to wise men, judge what we say." If Christ arose from the dead, then your faith is not abortive, then He is the true Messiah, then His doctrine is divine, then His sacrifice was accepted, and then His promises and threatenings will be fulfilled.

It remains for us to notice the heart-cheering consequences of Christ's resurrection.

If our "Lord is risen indeed," then the crucified, but now risen and infinitely exalted Jesus, was the true Messiah, and the Son of God.

Christ, after He had appeared on this stage of action, and more particularly after He had entered upon His ministerial career, evidenced in the strongest possible manner, his Messiahship. What but supernatural power could

cause, instantaneously, the lame to walk, the deaf to hear, the dumb to speak, the blind to see, remove the most loathsome diseases, diseases that bid defiance to all human skill, and above all, awaken the sleeping dead ?

And then miracles were not wrought in private ; they were not done in a corner, but in the presence of hundreds and thousands, not of common people only, but of many who ranked in the highest class of society. Besides, when He was baptized by his harbinger or forerunner, the Holy Spirit descended upon Him, in the form of a dove, and a voice from heaven was heard, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

But the strongest, the most overwhelming evidence we have of His divinity, is the fact of His resurrection. He had frequently told His disciples that He would rise from the dead on the third day. But if He had not risen from the dead, as he declared he would, then we should have had reason to doubt that he was truly God. He did, however, forsake the tomb, and rise triumphantly over death and the grave ; hence, he must have been the Messiah, and the Son of God. And if the Messiah, then Christianity, as taught in the New Testament, is divine also, and it is our bounden duty to believe, to experience and to practice it.

Again, if "the Lord is risen indeed," then his sacrificial death was completely efficacious. The Scriptures declare that he died for the sin of the world ; that he suffered the just for the

unjust, that he might bring us to God. And if He suffered the just for the unjust, then He made provision for the salvation of all, who repent and believe ; for all may, with the strictest propriety, be called unjust. "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." But if He had not risen from the dead, we should have cause to doubt the efficacy of His sacrifice. "If Christ," says Saint Paul, "be not raised, your faith is vain ; ye are yet in your sins ; and they also which are fallen asleep in Christ, are perished." He has, however, left the regions of death. Hence His sacrifice was completely efficacious. The resurrection of Jesus Christ has fixed the seal of His divinity upon His sacrifice, and God can now be just, and yet pardon our sins and save us from ruin. O, is not this most heart-cheering intelligence for our unfortunate race ? Despair not, penitent sinner ; continue to serve your Lord and Master, for He is the resurrection and the life, and the soul that believeth in Him shall never perish, but obtain a crown of endless felicity. Again, if "the Lord is risen indeed," then He will fulfil all the promises, with which His word is replete. His promises are numerous, and most glorious in their character.

He promised that he would give the Holy Spirit to his disciples, the spirit of truth, who should guide them into all truth, and aid them in every good word and work. And this promise received its fulfilment.

Moreover, he promised the church militant

that the gates of hell should not prevail against it; and is it not a glorious fact, that all the combined efforts of earth and hell, have been ineffectual, and that the Church still exists on earth, a memorial of the omnipotent grace and goodness of God.

He also promised to the mourner in Zion, rest from the lashings of a guilty conscience, peace of mind, and joy in the Holy Ghost. And if you are Christians, in reality, you can testify to the truth of the fulfilment of his promise in reference to yourselves.

Lastly, he has promised to all true believers, that they shall find grace to help them in every time of need, through all their earthly pilgrimage; promised to them a triumphant departure out of this world, and immortal glory beyond the grave.

And if he has power in heaven and on earth, if he is the true God, and eternal life, he of course will fulfil his promises; for he lives as Lord and Prince over death, and hades, and the devil. And here we would remark, if Christ is capable of fulfilling his promises, he has power likewise to fulfil his threatenings.

He threatened Jerusalem with destruction on account of the wickedness of her inhabitants. And we would ask the intelligent hearer if that threatening did not meet with a most signal fulfilment. O, let every sinner, therefore, repent and obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; for he hath declared that he will take vengeance upon all who obey not

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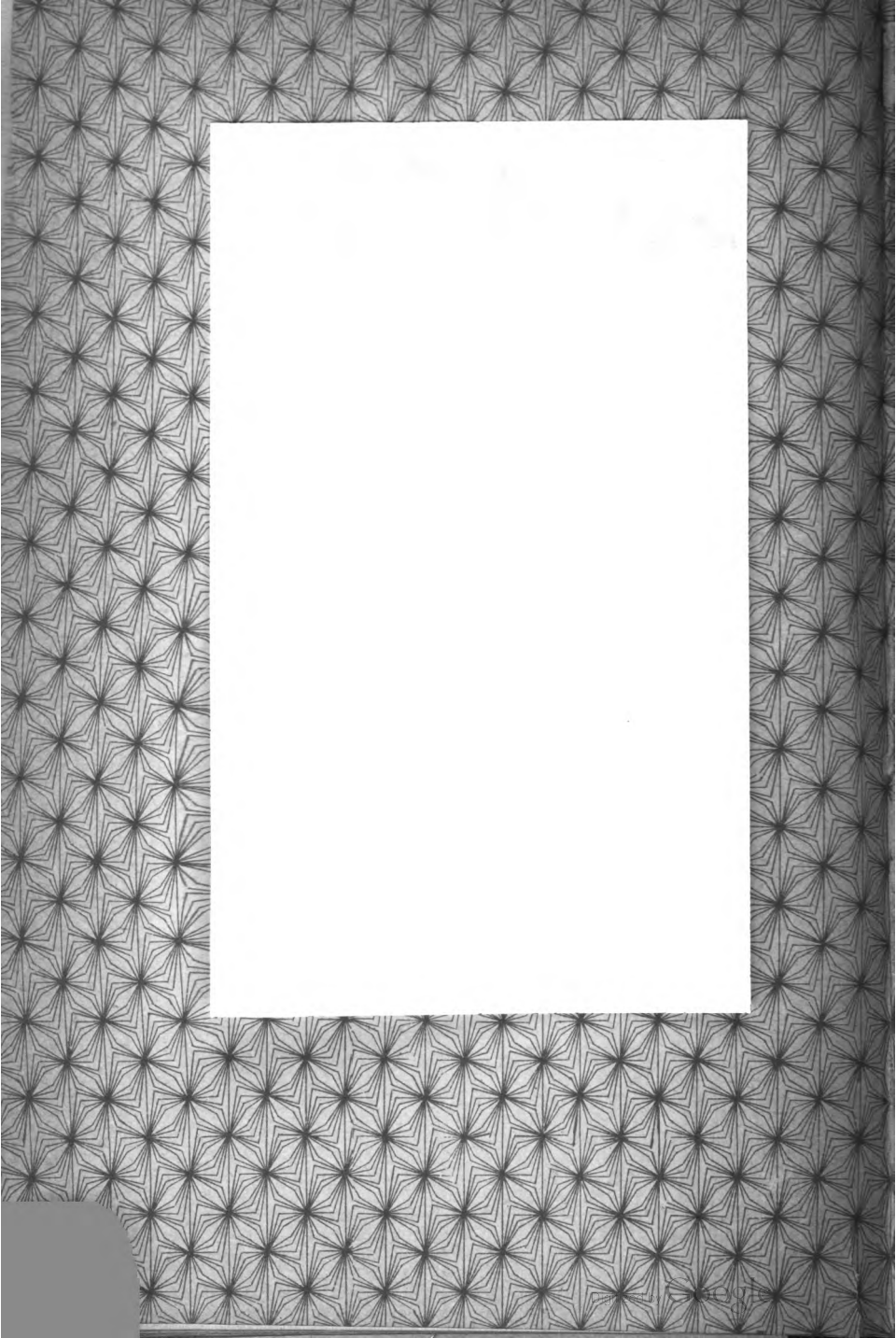
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Once more, if "the Lord is risen indeed," then we shall also rise from the dead. The apostle Paul grounded his hope of the resurrection of the body, upon the great and undeniable fact of the Saviour's resurrection. Hear him : "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the first fruits ; afterwards they that are Christ's at his coming."

O, does not this assurance afford to the Christian pilgrim the highest degree of comfort, while tabernacling in this vale of tears and death. What can give the dying saint more or greater consolation, when he is compelled to bid his weeping friends and kindred, around his dying couch, the last, long adieu, than the blessed assurance that there will be a resurrection of the dead ! What but this assurance will or can support and comfort us in the hour and article of death, even the hope of a glorious resurrection !

And if we shall have part in the first resurrection, an entrance shall be administered unto us abundantly, into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.



CROUSE, J

The life and work of Francis Luth.85

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